

The significance of the front-page story about the proposed rearrangement of parishes and schools in Chemung County prompted us to request a "guest editorial" from the diocesan Superintendent of schools, Father Daniel Brent. His thoughts in the section below are directed to the people of the Southern Tier particularly.

But the meaning of the Donovan Report, based on statistical evaluation of the opinions expressed by 26,000 households in the diocese, must be studied by parishioners of every county. Our crisis is diocesan wide.

The problem of increasing school costs, declining pupil enrollment, inefficient duplication of effort, shortage of religious personnel cannot be met by an attitude that "everything will turn out all right". Imaginative new approaches, setting aside parochialism and reforming the administration of parishes as well as schools seem to be demanded by the issues which threaten the existence of the present system.

A Guest Editorial On S. Tier Schools

By FATHER DANIEL BRENT

Sister Patricia Donovan's proposal is a visionary, comprehensive plan which doesn't isolate the Catholic school issue but looks at the whole picture of the Church's mission in Chemung County.

At a time when resources are at a premium—particularly human resources — we need imaginative ideas like these to accomplish the most with what we have.

I'm sure the people of Elmira, Elmira Heights and Horseheads will have mixed emotions about these suggestions. They may fear that the sacrifices they have made for their parishes will somehow be lost. Actually the proposals build on what has been done and offer a plan to use future resources in a somewhat different—hopefully more effective — way.

The plan suggested by the Report will also mean some realigning of parish loyalties. This is always difficult. But I believe it would be even more difficult to forego the pastoral and educational benefits that would result in the long run from the changeover.

The plan suggests a new organizational design for the schools which has several advantages: It will provide a better grouping arrangement for children, opening the door to more effective learning. It will reduce duplication of instructional materials and equipment. It will allow more room for the differentiated staffing and greatly improved use of teacher talent. Very important to the people of Elmira, the broad scope of the proposals will offer insurance against the loss of secondary school education because of lowered enrollments and cost increases.

Lesson for Youth

Over-30s around the world can take some kind of perverse satisfaction out of reports of the goings-on during the World Youth Assembly just concluded at the United Nations.

According to Religious News Service, youthful members of the Assembly's Commission for World Peace and Security spent much more time than their elder counterparts in almost uninterrupted ideological shouting matches and parliamentary wranglings during the three-day meeting.

Things went wrong right from the beginning as the steering committee learned that many proved to be outside the 16-25 age limit — 68 per cent of the delegates, in fact, were more than 25.

The regular Greek delegation was the target of a credential challenge by exiled composer Mikos Theodorakis, a youthful 45, who later withdrew anyway because he couldn't share the same room with those representing "the Greek colonels."

The Puerto Ricans also walked out, charging that the meeting was compromised by ideological interests.

The U.S. and Western European delegations savored the background as Albania and the Soviet Union traded accusations.

Late in the meeting a denunciation of U.S. policy in Vietnam and in Latin America was "rammed through", as the New York Times put it. This caused 50 participants to mount a protest and an Austrian history student to ridicule the assembly as a "supermarket of propaganda."

Maybe it all proves that running the world is not so easy after all.

—Carmen Vigluzzi

Church's Role: Salvation

Editor:

Terence Cardinal Cooke recently appealed for an active campaign to have the extremely liberal New York State abortion law repealed. It was curious to attend Mass a few days later and hear a sermon on the new Baptism rite.

How strange it seemed to have the vilest of pornographic motion pictures and literature in our community while listening to the latest on the new funeral Mass from the pulpit.

When millions of youngsters were "blowing their minds" with drugs, we heard talks in church on air and water pollution. All kinds of laws were broken at "rock festivals" and immorality prevailed, and we heard hardly a peep of admonition.

It seems to me the main duty of the church ought to be morality and salvation. Frankly, I am bored with lectures on the new liturgy. I believe the American Catholic church should heed the exhortations

of the Holy Father and return to its major role of mother-educator. Let us again hear the lessons of the Gospels, of the Ten Commandments and the saving of souls:

Nicholas Hober
101 Lapham Street,
Rochester

Church's Stand On War Hit

Editor:

In two editorials in this week's Courier-Journal, the subject of abortion is discussed, or rather, condemned. The law which is the cause of the controversy is called "regressive, wicked, horrendous", and Catholics of New York state are exhorted to "campaign to reverse the life-destroying trends in society . . . and uphold the sanctity of human life."

If the Catholic Church is so concerned with upholding the sanctity of human life that it condemns abortion as "murder" when there is a strong probability that this is not the case, why hasn't the Church taken an equally strong stand

on war, when human lives are wantonly destroyed, not singly, but by the hundreds and thousands?

Father Cuddy has compared abortion with the genocide of the Jews during World War II; he completely ignores the current genocide taking place in Indochina. He also denies the emotionalism which led to the slogan, "The only good German is a dead German", and yet how often is this paraphrased and applied to the ideology of the majority of people in Indochina — "The only good commie is a dead commie".

These people are fighting to protect their land, to protect a way of life that they have known for centuries. In many instances, they see the Communists as allies, protecting them from the Americans who slaughter their people, burn their villages and defoliate their fields.

I fail to see why, if human life is as sacred as the Church is claiming regarding abortion, the Church hasn't voiced this same objection to the war in Indochina, and to a society that measures its success by the number of "enemies" killed each day. The fact that they are called enemies does not detract from the fact that they are also human beings; if we are civilized men, we do not kill off those with whom we disagree. The fact that it is condoned by the government, as is the abortion law, does not make it morally justifiable.

—Diane Marie Parus
34 Halstead St.
Rochester, N.Y.

Claims Editing Distorted Letter

Editor:

The connotation of my letter published in the Courier-Journal (7-15-70) in regard to Father Greeley was completely changed by the elimination of two sentences. In both sentences I referred to God as the Supreme Authority. It is regrettable that you chose to eliminate Him from my letter.

—Mrs. Nina McPhilly
Foster Road
Corning, New York

Editor's Note: In taking Father Greeley "and his brothers" to task for their views on Vietnam, Mrs. McPhilly concluded her first paragraph with the sentence "And have they completely lost sight of their love of God? Has it been forgotten or just ignored, that under communism, the state is God?"

Her last paragraph also was deleted — "Far better would it be for all of us if our priests would pray to God to help our President, rather than attack him."

We do not believe these deletions changed the sense of Mrs. McPhilly's letter. We also take this occasion to remind our readers to keep their letters brief and limited to one thought.

The Word for Sunday

Giving Is Giving Back

By Father Albert Shamon



Sunday's readings underscore the prodigality of the "one God and Father of all". Regarding twenty barley loaves, Elisha said, "They shall eat and there shall be some left over". Of the five barley loaves given Jesus, St. John writes that the crowd ate "as much as they wanted".

God has made us all dependent beings. Once there was a radio program titled "Ten Thousand Men Make My Breakfast". It showed how many hands had to work just to make a pitcher of milk present on the breakfast table; then it traced the origin of the butter, the sugar, the toast — ten thousand hands! Because we are so interdependent, we ought to learn from God to be prodigal in generosity — in giving.

Some give only when they get headlines. The Christian gives even when no thanks are in sight.

Giving blesses more people than the one receiving. In The Merchant of Venice, after Portia had saved Antonio's life, she returned to her estate at Belmont at night. As she approached her mansion through the darkness, Portia pointed out to her companion, Nerissa, a light burning in a hall. "How far that little candle throws his beams!" The she mused, "So shines a good deed in a naughty world". So every good act extends far beyond the giver and the receiver. The farmer from Baal-shalishah came to feed the prophet, and a hundred others were fed. The lad in the Gospel gave five loaves and fifty hundred ate. How much God can do with a generous little!

Giving is generous when what is given is quickly given. He gives twice who gives quickly. Both the man from Baal-shalishah and the lad gave as soon as they could. So often, where God is concerned, we wait until we have it to give. Then it is often too late. God always asked for first fruits — for the best part. Some offer God only crumbs. They will pray, for instance, only if they have time. They will go to Sunday Mass — only if they have time. Every-

thing else is first, God is last. Even the Sunday collection is a pittance. And should the budget get pinched, what is the first thing cut? Yet how foolish! Where can one get so much interest for money anywhere as from God? Give Him your May and June, and He will care for you in November and December.

Finally, to give is to give back what we have received. "What have we," asked St. Paul, "that we have not received?" Having received, we ought to share. Never to give is unnatural. Suppose the good earth received seed, but never gave back a harvest. Suppose the ocean receiving the waters of myriad generous streams never gave away any vapors to build the clouds whose rains give the earth its budding greenery and sparkling streams. Suppose the tiny sparrow never passed on the life it receives. Suppose man — but why suppose? Is not this one of the great tragedies of twentieth century man: he is begrudging the transmission of life?

In Israel there are two seas: one gives of its waters, it feeds the Jordan River, life abounds in it, our Lord walked its shores and loved it — the Sea of Galilee; there is another sea, a greedy one, it gulps down the Jordan's waters, but it has no outlet, it feeds no streams, Christ never walked its waters — it is even to this day called the Dead Sea.

COURIER-JOURNAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

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