



FR. PAUL J. CUDDY

On The Right Side

This article flows from my reaction to a comment by a confident layman who said: "I am compelled to disagree with you practically every week."

"You read like a backwoods fundamentalist trying to turn back the clock of history and theology. After all, we have had Vatican II."

Frankly I have no expectation of my critic's comprehending what I write.

From 1946 to 1950 I was Catholic chaplain of Sampson College, a temporary college 16 miles south of Geneva. Mary Francis Walsh, sister of Father John Walsh, who is pastor of St. Paul's in Webster, was secretary to Dean Loutit, head of the College. Through her I met another secretary, a specialist in psychological abstracts. I do not recall her name, but she was thirtyish, profoundly serious, a Jewish refugee, who had that trace of a haunted look common among Jews who experienced the Nazi hunt for them.

Miss X was interested in American education but had no car; so one day I took her to Ithaca, some 40 miles south, to see Cornell University. After we had toured the University we were driving by Ithaca City Library downtown. She exclaimed: "Would you mind stopping for three minutes? I wish to see something." She dashed in, and returned within the declared three minutes, a feat incomprehensible to the normal American female.

As we drove on she said: "The reason I wanted to go into the library was to see the book jackets on the bulletin boards. I am doing a psychological study on the effect of book jackets on readers. Frequently the impression given by the book cover blurbs is contrary to the contents. This has a disturbing psychological effect upon the reader who expects one thing and receives a different one."

I frequently recall her comment as I read the blurbs for books, cinema, and the frequently-misleading ads on TV. I never did know her religious views, excepting that she had a Jewish background; but one day she said to me: "I greatly admire the Catholic Church. It has roots!" From a Jewish intellectual, uprooted from her native land and culture, who knew the terror from hatred, this was an impressive recognition both of the stability of the Catholic Church, and the value of traditions.

Nearly a quarter of a century later a Jewish doctor who had been imprisoned by the Nazis, but not in a concentration camp, was discussing world trends and turmoil. Noting the trend among agitators within the Church, he commented: "If the Catholic Church ever fell apart it would be an irreparable harm to the world. I am not a Catholic but I do recognize the Church as the great force for stability in the world."

Dr. Victor Frankl, professor of psychiatry and neurology at the U. of Vienna, and who experienced dreadful Auschwitz, wrote: "At the beginning of human history, man lost some of the basic animal instincts in which an animal's behaviour is imbedded and by which it is secured. Such security, like Paradise, is closed to man forever; man has to make choices."

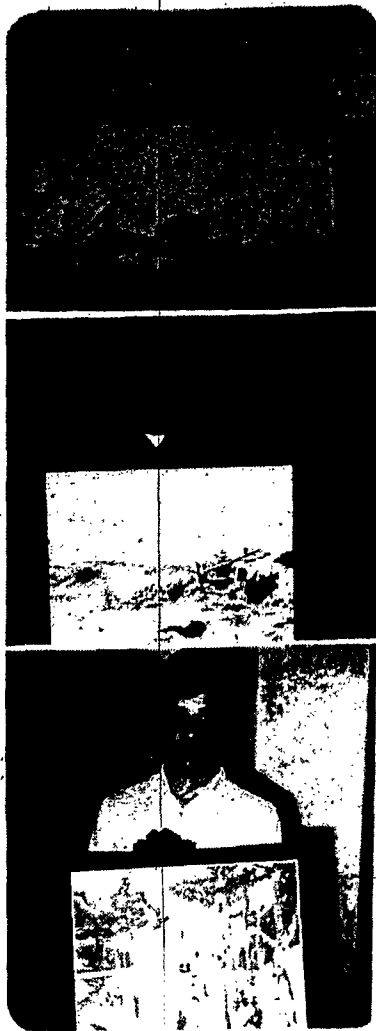
"In addition to this, however, man has suffered another loss in his more recent development. The traditions which had buttressed his behaviour are now rapidly diminishing. No instinct tells him what he has to do; and no tradition tells him what he ought to do. Soon he will not know what he has to do. More and more he will be governed by what others want him to do, thus increasingly falling prey to conformism." (Man's Search for Meaning—p. 168)

The unsolicited testimony of three persons who have experienced suffering and horror to the value of stability gives continuing witness of the Catholic Church working in the world. The Church knows her identity.

"Christ gave His Church no proper mission in the political, economic, or social order. The purpose which He set before her is a religious one. But out of this religious mission itself come a function, a light, and an energy which can serve to structure and consolidate the human community according to the divine law. As a matter of fact, when circumstances of time and place create the need, she can and indeed should initiate activities on behalf of all men." (Church in the World—No. 42)

"Christ likened Himself to the stone which the builders rejected, but which became the cornerstone. On this foundation the Church is built by the apostles and from it the Church receives durability and solidity." (The Church—No. 6)

To quote my critic: "After all, we have had Vatican II." To which I respond with a big enthusiastic Methodist: AMEN!



Art Winners

Winners of the St. James Mercy Hospital Clothesline Art Show are: (Top to bottom) Miss Jessie Palmatier, of the business office staff, who won first prize with her oil, "Midnight Blue"; James Coogan, housekeeping department, second with his oil, "Winter"; and Robert Marino, maintenance department, third with his oil, "Winter at the Lake."

St. Ann's School Opens for 262

Hornell — Sister Ambrose, principal of St. Ann's School, says everything is ready for re-opening Sept. 8.

The school "has been cleaned from top to bottom" she said. The state books are in, and Sister Ambrose hopes for student volunteers to unpack them. The school has enrolled 262 students.

Gym facilities have been provided for St. Ann's students at the YMCA. Two new teachers have been added to the staff,

Sister Denise, who will teach the first grade, and Mrs. Ruth Apel, who will teach third.

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