



FR. PAUL J. CUDDY

On The Right Side

The English reading public has attended Malcolm Muggeridge for decades. A Cambridge graduate of the twenties, he has been a university lecturer, journalist, author. When editor of the London *Punch* in the fifties, he wrote satire so subtly savage in its earnestness that thinking men tread cautiously and pondered respectfully. They still do. Today as a Broadcaster for TV and radio in the British Broadcasting Company, he is influential. A few times he seemed on the brink of becoming a Catholic. But while on the brink he has been repelled by movements and persons within the Church.

Muggeridge has just published *Something Beautiful for God*, a book on the work of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. It even includes a bona fide photographic miracle. The book was occasioned by his meeting Mother Teresa on a BBC talk show. He was so moved by her transparent holiness that he joined a group from BBC going to India to televise her work among the cast-off dying and abandoned in the streets of the city. His book narrates sketchily the life and work of Mother Teresa, the Albanian who left her Yugo-Slav homeland to become a Missionary Sister in India.

Mother Teresa is deeply devoted to the Church in faith, ardor and obedience. Muggeridge writes wistfully of her praying that he will embrace the Faith. The struggle in his soul he manifests in the bite of his pen, in a poignant passage.

"What is more difficult to convey the longing one feels to belong to the Church; the positive envy of those the bell calls to Mass. How often I have watched them, particularly in France . . . all making their way to Church on a Sunday morning. What a joy to be one of their number! to kneel with them, advance to the altar with them; there, side by side, swallowing the Body of Christ . . . Of all the purposes which drew people together — excitement, cupidity, curiosity, lechery, hatred — this alone, worship, makes them seem like a loving family.

"Why not, then? Because for me it would be fraudulent, and we cannot, dear Mother Teresa, buy faith with counterfeit urges. I know perfectly well, that however much I long for it to be otherwise, the bell does not ring for me."

Then follows this acrid observation: "Today the Church, for inscrutable reasons of its own, has decided to have a reformation just when the previous one is finally running into the sand. I make no judgment about something which, as a non-member, is no concern of mine; but if I were a member, then I should be forced to say that, in my opinion, if men were stationed at the doors of churches with whips to drive worshippers away, or inside the religious orders specifically to discourage vocations, they could not hope to be as effective in achieving these ends as are the trends and policies seemingly now dominant within the Church . . ." Then he muses: "All this, I well know, would make little or no impression on Mother Teresa, whose allegiance to the Church is in quite other dimensions. I can say for myself that if ever it became clear to me that I could enter the Church in honesty and

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truth, I should rush to do so . . ." (pp. 59 seq.)

For what it's worth, ever since our own Religious Congregations have reinterpreted poverty, prayer, vows, obedience; indeed, community life itself, in a kind of English which makes dictionaries useless, the one time beautiful procession of virgin candidates to the religious life has ceased. Not so with Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity. In the years when the disintegration of religious communities in the States, from 1965-1971 began, and continues, Mother Teresa's community flourished and develops: from Calcutta to Venezuela, Ceylon, Tanzania, Rome, Jordan, England. This past October she entered Harlem to plan for her congregation's first American house for the abandoned and dying. Her authentic religious life, rooted in traditions tried and true, finds a flood of vocations. If you want to give a book for Christmas, *Something Beautiful for God* (\$5.95) makes a beautiful gift. Our discouraged Catholic people will take courage in this inspiration.

Mercy Students 'Personalize' Food Baskets

Mercy High School students are trying to put people back in Christmas.

Every year the girls have a drive to collect canned goods and make up Christmas baskets for needy families. They found it a frustrating, de-personalizing experience; something was missing.

Sister Jane Shore called Father Charles Mulligan at the Office of Human Development for advice on how to make giving more meaningful for the students.

Father Mulligan arranged for them to meet with Sarah Jones, president of the Welfare Rights Organization, and Julio Vasquez, the community organizer for the Ibero-American Action League.

Mrs. Jones and Vasquez told the students that getting to know the families they were giving presents to would help. They advised the students to visit the families and let them plan their own celebration, let them plan their own Christmas dinners and list what the children need and want for gifts.

Vasquez informed the students that they had been giving a northern American Christmas dinners and list what the children who don't traditionally eat turkey and cranberry sauce.

Following these instructions the girls hope to learn of the traditions of different cultures and make friendships that will last the year around.

Girls Basketball Clinic

Something new has been added to the athletic activity program of the CYO in the form of a special Girls' Basketball Clinic for any junior high school girl.

The program will consist of three consecutive-week classes beginning Saturday, Jan. 8 from 2-4 p.m. Total cost for the three

classes is \$2 per girl. Advance registration is required, and may be made by calling 454-2030.

According to Howie Revans, CYO athletic director, all basketball skills will be taught including dribbling, passing, shooting, offense and defense, game situations and rules.

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COURIER-JOURNAL

on

January 5th

as

a regular columnist.

Watch for his column

Toward Tomorrow
by Father Henry Atwell

a regular feature
in the COURIER-JOURNAL
beginning January 5th

