

FR. HENRY ATWELL
**Toward
Tomorrow**



I had toyed with the idea a few years back of writing a book to be titled "The Church in the Year 2020."

If I had finished it for 1970 that would be just 50 years ahead of that intriguing year 2020.

For many of us, the year 2020 is over the rainbow in that never-never land of the next century. But for half the human race living today, unless some fool presses the button for world destruction, most people will still be here to write February 9, 2020.

What will it be like then? What will the Church be like?

One wag suggested I publish a book of 400 blank pages. Others shrugged their shoulders and asked, "What difference does it make now?" Only a few seemed fascinated by the thought of what might be, of what should be.

Science and industry are certainly future oriented. Repeatedly we read of space stations in the later years of this decade, trips to Mars later than that, and possible inter-galactic travel at super-luminary speeds. Major business corporations are even working on payrolls and budgets for at least ten years from now and many industrial decisions have a ten year time lag between decision and realization.

An old adage said it simply, "The man is in the boy."

What we are today, what we decide today shapes the future.

And to neglect to decide, to do nothing, will condemn the Church to be a nothing in that year 2020, and the wag who talked about blank pages will have been proved correct.

There is, however, a factor beyond the mere human in the Church. To those who have faith, God is at work bidding us follow him confidently

into that next century — yes, to follow him, for he is there, that is what eternity is all about.

Too often we are reluctant to be moved out of our comfortable present habits, out of our nostalgic memories of the "good old days" long past.

Marshall McLuhan, a philosopher of the arts of communication, once remarked that life is like driving an automobile. You have a vast windshield in front of you to see where you're going. But it's a wise driver who occasionally glances into his rear-view mirror to keep an eye on what's behind him too. McLuhan said that too often too many people in the Church reverse the process. They spend most of their time looking back and only occasionally dare peep into the future. If a driver ever did that on an expressway you can easily imagine the inevitable smash-up he'd have. And that may explain a bit of the present hesitation and enervation which characterizes so many aspects of Church life today.

One clear and manifest vote of confidence in the future, as I see it, is Bishop Hogan's determination to open the Church in our diocese to the talents and voices of far more lay people through parish councils and eventually a diocesan Pastoral Council.

There is always the hazard that these councils can become mere nit-picking meetings for shallow minds and big mouths, but if that happens then those who've hoped and pleaded for a Church with a vision can blame nobody but themselves for failing to seize this present opportunity.

And that is what I mean when I say the future is being forged now.

We can't just wait for Somebody upstairs to cook up the perfect, Church and serve it to us when we ring the servant's bell. We have to do that job ourselves, starting now.

FR. PAUL J. CUDDY
**On The
Right Side**



If St. Paul were a 35 year old parish priest today, I think he would be greatly involved not only in parish affairs, but also in civic affairs, ecumenical gatherings, in radio and TV programs. And I think he probably would be working hard to become a Bishop.

Let these considerations be misconstrued, let's clarify. The term "35 years old" simply indicates that from 35 to 55 men are usually at their physical, emotional and a kind of raw intellectual prime. They enjoy dynamic energy. Usually from 55 on, men are less enterprising, more prudent, and frequently wiser and less emotionally charged. They have the benefit of experience. They may spin their wheels less, but frequently they accomplish more with less motion, less bureaucracy, and less emotion. As men grow older, most tend to slow down to a less energetic, less erratic pace, and work less glamorously, more ploddingly.

The "involvement" cycle is part of the energy and imagination and togetherness syndrome of these valuable 20 years. As men grow older they tend to enjoy less the ceaseless dialogues, the talkathons and the position papers in which younger men exult. What is good and effective among the younger could well be silly in the older: something like a 60 year old man aping the dress, the speech, the idiosyncracies of youth.

St. Paul's ecumenical activities would be perfervid: flowing from his own hyper temperament and his passionate love for Our Lord. "I preach Christ and Him crucified." While he would certainly regret divisions, as he did with the Apollonists and Petrinists and Johannines, he would be glad for every man's love for the Crucified and Risen God-Man, Jesus Christ. But reading the letters of St. Paul makes it evident that he would find the Vatican II decree on Ecumenism congenial; and he would certainly blister those who disregard the decree in its real teaching.

It is doubtful that St. Paul would

be a parish priest very long. He would work to become a bishop: not for his own glory, an ideal he would fault with great contempt; but to be in a position to promote the Gospel more effectively. He would surely use TV and radio to spread the Gospel "in season and out of season." I suspect that he would have scratched his bald head as he read in the paper that some religious order in South America gave away a radio station they owned to a farming group. He probably would have thought: "The voice of Christ could be sent out to the multitude. Surely we could help the farmers but why give the station away? Who knows what changes come in secular groups. And we preach Jesus Christ yesterday, today, the same forever!"

But while he was a parish priest, St. Paul would use his parish bulletin to communicate with, to instruct and to inspire his parishioners. Recently I picked up the Jan. 23 bulletin from St. Alphonsus Church, Auburn, and was edified to find Father Lewis Brown's research communicated to the parishioners; and through this column, it is communicated to you.

CARE: "The students of St. Alphonsus school were asked how they would show their care for the school. The following are their responses.

I care enough for St. Alphonsus school to:

Improve my conduct on the playground and in the cafeteria.

To say hello to people we meet in school.

To obey the rules of our school.

To be friendly by treating each other kindly.

To keep the rooms cleaner, and help each other.

To listen to our teachers and do as they say."

Whether they are young, middling, or aging, priests are sent to be shepherds: to instruct, to confirm, to edify. And bishops are the number one Shepherds. Listen to them.

*A Liturgical Confirmation Tunic Designed and
Created Exclusively for use in the Confirmation Ceremony*

by Catholic Enterprises

1589 Sheridan Drive, Kenmore, N.Y. 14217

Robes shown herewith are what thousands of children in the Rochester Diocese and throughout the United States will be wearing this year for Confirmation.

On back of the tunics is THE CLOVEN OF FIRE, to signify God's Love and Light, "To bear witness to Christ in everything you do."

Banding on the sleeves, the SEVEN TONGUES OF FIRE isto impress on the child's mind the SEVEN WONDERFUL GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

ALL WORK IS DONE BY CATHOLIC ENTERPRISES
Rental fee is very nominal and includes the following:

1. Robe, amice-type scarf, for both boys and girls. A simple attractive hat is supplied for girls.
2. Our Confirmation book with the new Rite of Confirmation in English and all of the Confirmation hymns. We give a booklet to each child.
3. We measure, deliver and distribute the robes to your children.
4. Our representatives are present the night of Confirmation to be of service to you.
5. We pick up the robes immediately following Confirmation rites, avoiding all work and worry to Sisters, Priests and parents.

PLEASE LET US SERVE YOUR PARISH. IF YOU
HAVE NOT PLACED YOUR ORDER AS YET PLEASE
CALL COLLECT 1-716-875-1496 MRS. PHILIP J.
(JANE) MAIARANA.

