

FR. LOUIS HOHMAN

## The Open Window



Q. — What is the Church's stand on capital punishment?

Capital punishment has been regarded by the Church over the years as a legitimate form of punishment on the basis that the community has a right to defend itself against serious attack by an individual and may use what means are necessary to repel or prevent such attacks, even to taking the individual's life.

While such a principle might be sound in theory, in the abstract, its workability is subject to conditions. In practice, the chief consideration must be whether killing a criminal is actually capable of repelling or preventing crime. Certainly the state (society) would not have the right to take a human life simply in revenge. Nor would it seem that capital punishment is capable of repelling attacks on society. So the issue boils down to whether capital punishment is a real deterrent to serious attacks on the community.

Arguments can be given for both sides, but we are reminded of the time in British history when pickpocketing was a capital offense but not for long because it was discovered that the time of the hangings was a very lucrative occasion for pickpockets.

We are reminded, too, of the case of Nathan Leopold, co-perpetrator of the "Crime of the Century" in Chicago, who spent most of his life in prison but was finally released to live out the rest in great usefulness and charity.

Our own personal thought is that serious crimes are more often than not committed without thought of the penalty, at least as effective deterrent. Of course, there are many who would contend that since kidnapping was made a capital offense the incidence of that crime has declined. Who knows?

One more consideration. In this era when life has to a large extent been depreciated in value by war and abortion, the mere existence of capital punishment can, we think, merely further that depreciation. It would seem that a highly sophisticated society could find means of dealing with criminals more consistent with the dignity of human life if we were willing to spend the money and time to discover them.

Questions for Father Hohman should be addressed to him care of "The Open Window", the Courier-Journal, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604.

## 'Padre Caliman' Home for Visit

By JOHN DASH

"I'm not a prophet, but a little parish priest," bellowed Father Paul Freemesser as he crammed his 38-year-old, 225 pound frame into a little black chair in the Courier-Journal offices last week.

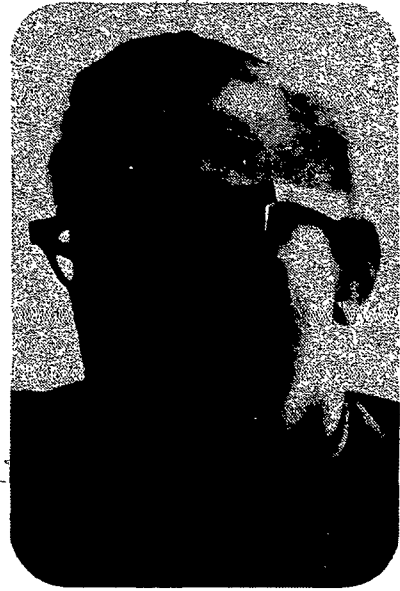
Father Freemesser is one of the Rochester priests working in the parish of St. Joseph the Worker in La Paz, Bolivia. Sporting a gray suit, orange rabat and red suede shoes, ("Do I have to walk around looking like a mummy?"), Father Freemesser spent some time in the diocese thanking the people for their support of the Latin American Missions staffed by Rochester personnel.

He left last Friday for the Southwest and plans to spend some time in clinical pastoral education at Walter Reed Hospital before returning to La Paz.

"You can pick up the Gospel and you've got to be an imbecile not to understand it," he thundered. "We (the Church) belong where people don't want to be. That's always been the success of the Church."

"When everything is said and done, there are only two things left: People and love," he roared.

He's had "an awful lot of satisfaction" out of his priesthood; but, "only thing that scares me is kids don't want to do what we're doing."



But, he says, the kids in La Paz call him Padre Caliman. Holy Missionary! That means they think he's as great as Batman. Amen.

## Mrs. Donahue Elected As State CDA Regent

Mrs. Frank J. Donahue of Brockport was elected regent of the New York State Court, Catholic Daughters of America, at the biennial convention last month at Swan Lake. She succeeds Miss Margaret McKearney of Rego Park.

Mrs. Donahue was state vice regent for six years. Prior to that she had served 12 years in state offices. She also had been district deputy and for several years chairman of the State Seminary-Scholarship Fund. She is a charter member of Brockport Court, Nativity of Our Lady.

She is secretary of the board of directors of Lakeside Memorial Hospital and work chairman of the Twig Association. Her husband is retired village clerk-treasurer of Brockport.

The convention drew 750 members from all areas of the state, with 172 voting delegates representing 213 courts.

The national CDA was founded by the Knights of Columbus in 1903 and has a membership of more than 200,000 in 45 states, including Hawaii and Alaska, in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Canal Zone.

### NEW OFFICERS

Bath — The new officers of the Rosary and Altar Society for 1972 are: Olga Keefe, president, Dorothy Yost, vice president, Jean Mackowiak, secretary, and Patricia Adamowicz, treasurer.

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