

Every Beginning... A Sign of Hope

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Church of God, we shall perforce be called upon to examine carefully much of the superstructure. We shall, after careful consideration of our role as ministers of serving people, be called upon perhaps to scrutinize many presently accepted ways of doing things. We shall painfully surrender some cherished practices for the needs of ministry today. We shall look carefully at the concept of "parish" as we know it now — not to eliminate it, for it enjoys specific endorsement as the most viable instrument for the conveyance of truth and the expression of community on the local scene, but it must at the same time be evaluated and the evaluation may call upon it to provide service in a vastly different

way from that to which we have become accustomed and attached.

In the learning of new skills and styles of leadership imperative to extending the Good News of our Salvation we must begin with ourselves. We must undertake our part in renewal with genuine humility, becoming good listeners and teachers. The virtue of humility is not and never shall become incompatible with a desire for excellence or impede excellence in any human performance. Quite to the contrary. United with every work of Christ and for Him then must be our overriding and genuine sense of dependence on our Heavenly Father for support and assistance.

At the root of our personal effort there must be

prayer — individual prayer for which a call is clearly made in the documents of renewal, which call also for communal prayer as the evidence of our unity with each other in Christ. It is through prayer that we shall achieve the proper perspectives for our tasks. It is in prayer that we shall find the strength to assume the great work for which we have been chosen as ambassadors of the Kingdom of God. Prayer will assure us the humility which must be the hallmark of our own contribution to renewal, reminding us, as may be frequently necessary, that this renewal to which we are dedicated is not something to be fashioned and guarded as distinctly our own. It is the work of God.

Most Reverend John E. McCafferty, D.D.
Episcopal Moderator

More Letters to the Editor

Warns About Leftists

Editor:

I have read and watched, with growing uneasiness, as so many of our Christian leaders have on so many occasions, aligned themselves closer and closer with the ideologies of positive totalitarianism. I think that the wholesale assumption that leftists' politics reflect the only Christian response to the problems of America and the world, denies certain realities.

For all its problems and conflicts, I can find no reason to doubt that the United States of all the great nations ever to appear on this earth, has the most humane governmental system, is the freest and the most forgiving of criticism. Though I do not state the system is without fault, I need not look at nations where radical politics prevail and see how they have failed. One example — Cuba, a seedy concentration camp and so it goes whenever men seek total power over other men, even when they are motivated by "high idealism".

I believe that many of the clerical left are genuine pacifists who would reject any warfare as un-Christian. However, I find that many of the antiwar activists are highly selective in their pacifism. They are pacifists only as regards to American warfare against a radical or revolutionary leftist regime.

Our legal establishment is in danger when "idealists" assume that it must never penalize those who challenge it, if the challengers are acting out "Christian Idealism". Anarchy and eventual totalitarianism lie down that road.

Anne Christoff
Rochester

Gun Control Not Answer

Editor:

The article, "Gun Control, Necessary or Anti American", (6/14/72), like so many appearing in public print today, is heavily loaded in favor of the anti-gun crowd. To begin with, it devotes 22½ column inches to the anti-gun theme and less than 6 in favor of guns. For an issue as large and as complicated as this is, I do not consider this to be unbiased reporting.

A large segment of the population has been persistently bombarded by political potentates, television pundits and prejudiced newspaper and magazine writers, leading them to believe that we can solve this whole problem by "passing a law".

Congress "passed a law" in 1918 guaranteed to solve the alcohol problem. Is there anyone who will maintain that the 18th Amendment did anything but plunge the nation into an orgy of drinking and bring on an era of crime and contempt for law?

"Passing a law" to register the nation's guns will have the same effect. Who is naive enough to believe that the professional thug, the gangster, the mugger,

the young revolutionist, the Black Panther types and their ilk will meekly march down to the court house to register their weapons? I will, you will, all us law-abiding citizens will, but not the underworld.

After a year or two, after we've all registered and the killings go on, then will come the big drive to confiscate all guns. Big Brother will take away the guns from us who registered our weapons, the underworld will keep theirs.

This may seem far-fetched, but, please, remember that the anti-gun crowd in Congress has publicly stated the ultimate aim to disarm America completely. Then we'll be just like Russia in one more way.

From that time on, when a thug decides to burglarize a house, he'll not have to worry about the home owner defending himself. The homeowner will be disarmed, but not the criminal.

If curbing crime is the aim of the anti-gun people, why do they not support the bill introduced by Sen. James Buckley? It would automatically give a five-year sentence to anybody committing a crime while armed, this in addition to the sentence meted out for the crime itself. This measure would apply to the District of Columbia only, but would serve as a testing ground for the effectiveness of such a law. Similar bills have been brought forward in many states. Our own gunhating governor in Albany vetoed a similar bill.

Many years ago New York State enacted the Sullivan Law, the most restrictive pistol bill in the nation. New York City has even more stringent restrictions. A glance at the newspaper any day will show how well they have solved the problem.

The end of needless killing, which we all want, will come when our courts start to enforce the law. Our state, among others, has repealed the death penalty for murder. Now a murderer is eligible for parole after serving 15 years of his sentence.

Don't forget, people, not guns, commit crimes.

F. Thomas Morrissey
Giles Street
Ithaca

Put Religion In Schools

Editor:

Whether to serve God or mammon is a problem confronting people in politics, and they must make the choice; they cannot blow hot then cold, for they lose the vote of those who advocate standing firm on issues of conscience. The sexual act which leads to pregnancy and then to abortion on the part of many young unmarried females should not be condoned; neither should married couples feel free to lightly dispose of the life started because it is an inconvenience. It is not prejudice to be against immorality, it is upholding the law of God, "Thou shalt not murder".

The early Christians had a choice of burning incense to idols or facing wild beasts in the Roman arena. We have a choice of sticking by the commandments or "formulating rules ethically plausible to the conduct of all people". Society has become too permissive in many respects, and continuing down that road can lead to further corruption of character and downfall of state and nation.

The word "justice" is much larger than its seven letters, and has not always been correctly interpreted, or we would not have the present disparity in financial situations both in classes of society and in public vs. non-public schools. Too many honest, skilled, and hard working families have too little to show for their efforts, and Catholics have for too many years borne the double burden of educating their own children in parochial schools, and other children in public schools. I do not believe it was the intent of our early government members to so tax one group because of religious belief. The words "separation of

Church and state" are too loosely defined by those who do not want to share tax monies.

While listening to atheists who have struck prayers from schools, the rights of parents who wished such prayers to continue were denied. Had our public schools included in their curriculum a course in religion open to those who wished to take it, rooms could have been provided, and priests, nuns, ministers, rabbis would, I am sure, gladly have made the trip to public schools to teach. In interfaith chapels, members of different faiths share the use. Instead of going with those who profess no faith in a deity, and who surely are not the majority, why not become engaged in a project aimed at restoring religion in schools?

Ethel Sercu
Green Knolls Drive

Call Attention To Misspelling

Editor:

Without offending anyone, we would like to correct a misspelled name in your June 14 edition under "Winners at Stella Maris."

From all that we have seen and heard John Foster — not Forte — is a much dedicated person and always gives much of himself in projects such as Stella Maris. His name is loved and respected in the area.

For these reasons we just had to call the error to your attention.

Mr. and Mrs. Chester A. Haak
Big Tree Street
Livonia

'New Town' Begun In Bolivian Jungle

The Rochester Diocese has been concerned lately with the mission of the Church to "new towns" proposed for this area.

In Rochester's Bolivian outpost, meanwhile, Father Peter Deckman is helping build a new town.

He set out from La Paz last month with 12 impoverished farmers to clear land, build houses and form a new community in the jungle to the north. A Maryknoll priest, Father William Coy, also is with the group.

A May 31 letter from Rochester's La Paz mission said the expedition left the city by truck May 13 and arrived May 16 in

the undeveloped territory. This was described as lush farming land, in contrast to the rugged, barren Altiplano, the native heath of the pioneers. Another 23 men were to join the government colonization project this month, and when the "new town" is ready, their families will be moved to it.

Of Father Deckman's participation, the letter says:

"Pete will be active in all phases of the work that these men are undertaking, but he will also be present as a spiritual leader, helping in the liturgies, instructing the men and their families and hopefully above all helping them to form a truly Christian community life."

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