Our Parish COUNCIL

by Bernard Lyons

Recently I gave a series of workshops on parish councils at the New England Congress of Religious Education. One of my memories of that Congress was joining the stream of people to take part in the Mass to be concelebrated by the bishops of the dioceses of that region.

On the way into the field house at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst we were greeted by women with painted faces (death masks?) in peasant costumes. They handed us leaflets. One leaflet had a large headline "Pardon us. . ."

"We are sorry to have to remind you that while you are attending this conference, thousands of Indochinese people will be killed, maimed, and made homeless by the military action of our government," the leaflet said, signed by Women Against the War.

"Although President Nixon proudly parades the fact that he has withdrawn our ground combat forces, he is not telling us that the most intensive bombing of any country in history is being conducted by our military this summer against the land and people of Vietnam. During this two-and-a-half days (of the Conference), nearly 8,000 tons of bombs will fall on the people of Indochina.

"Eight thousand tons of napalm, white phosphorous, fragmentation bombs, laser-guided missiles, tele-guided missiles, delayed action high explosives, horizontally exploding ball bearing anti-personnel bombs, diagonally exploding ball bearing anti-personnel bombs, steel arrowed fleshette pellet anti-personnel bombs, diagonally exploding ball bearing anti-personnel bombs, steel arrowed fleshette pellet anti-personnel bombs, fiberglass pellet anti-personnel bombs — specifically designed to make location by X-ray impossible."

The leaflet insisted that we must accept responsibility for the bombs that shatter and the napalm and white phosphorous that burn the bodies of the Indochinese.

"It is our tax money that buys the bombs. It is our silence that keeps them falling," the Women Against the War said.

The quiet dignity of the women handling the leaflets impressed me. I was also impressed by the number of people who said "Thank you!" to the women. They had the courage to remind us of this awful need for reconciliation as we went in to share the Body of Christ with our bishops.

The incident reminded me of a quote from a talk by Pope Paul VI before the "Angelus" last July. He said how peace in Vietnam had "lain heavily on our heart."

"We echo the groans of so many innocent victims; we make ours the voice of a population worn out by slaughter and ruin; we raise the cry of civilized humanity believing in justice and in love which must hold first place in relations between men and nations, to plead with those who can and must deliberate and discuss: It is enough! May you who are responsible for the fate of these regions demonstrate the wisdom and magnanimity which knows how to place the life and dignity of man above every other interest! And we wish for all those who are involved in the fierce conflict, the courage to make peace."

The courage to make peace! How often we associate courage with war and conflict.

But there is a courage to peace-making. I think of Dorothy Day. Of the Berrigan brothers. Of the parish council that voted **not** to pay the federal telephone tax which goes to pay for the war. Of a fellow parishioner who rides his bicycle to a draft-couselling session twice a week hoping that it'll all be over by the time his 11-year old son gets to the draft age. Of three of my friends, who in their frustration, burnt draft records in Indiana and Illinois.

What can we Christians do? What can we do united in our parish councils? I would like to hear from readers, with their stories, examples, and ideas. Write me in care of this paper. All letters will be answered.

Thank you!

Religion Teacher's Course Underway

"Religion Teacher's Renewal" is the theme of a ten-week course, which began Tuesday, Sept. 19, and will run for 10 consecutive Tuesdays until Nov. 21, at St. Ambrose School.

It is sponsored by the Christian Formation Committee at St. Ambrose.

The remaining schedule for the course is as follows: Sept. 26 — Father Albert Shamon on the catechetical process: Oct. 3 — Communal penance service, Father William Donnelly on moral formation and planning penance services for and with children: Oct. 10 — Lesson planning, parental involvement, the teacher as a model for interpersonal relations: Oct. 17 — Maureen Hagen and her class from Christ the King, with a demonstration lesson on penance: Oct. 24 — Activities to enhance a lesson from the text: Oct. 31 — Father Paul McCabe on planning children's liturgies, days of recollection, and celebrations: Nov. 7 — Mrs. Harper Sibley, Sr., on faith, hope, and experience as a religion teacher: Nov. 14 — Father Raymond Booth and Joseph Badamy, a teacher of the deaf at RIT, with a "Come to the Father" lesson: Nov. 21 — Marie Lynch, religious education coordinator at St. Paul's, Webster, on value clarification techniques.

The series is open to teachers of religion in the parochial schools and CCD programs, and anyone else interested. Registration can be made by contacting Ms. Karen DeLorme, 169 Bedford St., 482-0339, or Mrs. Eugene Staskin, 160 Deerfield Dr., 482-7258.

Each class runs from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Black Lay Catholics To Meet in Rochester

Representatives of Black Lay Catholic Caucus in New York State will meet here Oct. 14 to discuss the new national constitution; better means of communication among state, local, regional and national levels and to elect officers.

Caucuses from Buffalo, Albany, New York City and Rochester will be represented at the convention, said John Holmes, state chairman, who also is a member of the national board.

The local BLCC, according to Chairman Moses Anderson, is mainly interested right now in creating relevant Masses and "organizing traveling unity Masses to travel throughout the diocese to parishes that request it."

Anderson pointed out that the caucus is not an isolationist group. "We will work with any group or agency out to help human ills," he said.

"The belief of the caucus," he stressed, "is that black is black no matter what religion. We may worship in different churches but we are still a community."

"Our purpose," Anderson added, "is to bring new life to the Church and not death."

it is the MONROE Cherry House

Anniversary Sale

A STOREWIDE EVENT WITH GREAT SAVINGS OF 10% TO 50%.

Yes, the truly important Sales Event of better quality Americana and Traditional home furnishings, in Upstate New York, is now in full swing at both Cherry House East and Cherry House West. Prove it to yourself . . . shop and compare.

The handsome Williamsburg Fireside Chair displayed here is generously scaled with true lounge chair comfort. A very limited production is available in plush solid red velvet of fine quality, plus a combination custom covering of tapestry and velvet, in an olive or pumpkin combination.

Formerly $219.

Anniversary Sale Price $159

Please allow 3 weeks for delivery.

East
2349 Monroe Ave.
Rochester, N.Y.
244-2440

MONROE Cherry House
ROCHESTER, N.Y. SPENCERPORT, N.Y.

West
138 So. Union St.
Spencerport N.Y.
352-4200

Master Charge and Bank Americard