

FR. LOUIS HOHMAN

The Open Window



Q. Original sin, we were taught, was the result of the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Paradise. Now we learn that they never existed — that the story is just Biblical fiction, to be believed or not as each person sees it. What is the Church's answer to this?

A. Many people are hung up on the same question you are. Which goes to prove, as far as I am concerned, that we priests were very good teachers of children but we have failed miserably with adults.

— From childhood up, you and many people have taken the absolute literal interpretation of the first chapters of the Genesis. You took all the words at their face value. But not all truth is conveyed in this way. For example, if I wanted to convey to someone the folly of greed I might simply tell the story of the dog and the bone. There may never have been such a dog, and no dog may ever have looked into a stream and dropped the bone he had, trying to capture the reflected one, but I'm sure you would get the point of the story and that would be what I wanted in the first place.

I am NOT saying there were no Adam and Eve. There may very well have been. But that particular fact is a matter for science to ascertain. The Bible had no intention of teaching science. But it does teach religious truth. In the story of Adam and Eve it conveys very beautifully the idea that man is at the pinnacle of God's material creation, that the family of man is just that — we are all descended from common ancestors and therefore are related to one another, are brothers and sisters and equals.

In regard to original sin, the beautiful story of Adam and Eve teaches us that man from the very beginning of his existence on earth rebelled against God, decided to be his own God, and that trend simply continued in the human race until Jesus Christ by his obedience to the Father's will "even unto death" reversed the trend to destruction and gave man the possibility of coming to his true destiny, as a child of God.

As long as we grasp this all important truth it is somewhat irrelevant whether there was a tree and an apple and a serpent. Frankly only the most conservative fundamentalist theologians go along with a literal interpretation of the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis. If you want to go along with them, that is your privilege. The only point that really matters, though, is that all of us get the basic religious message which those chapters convey. How we look at life will depend on how we understand man's origin, his dignity, his sinfulness, his possibility of redemption and his destiny.

In conclusion may I refer to the part of your letter that reads, "that the story is just Biblical fiction, to be believed or not as each person sees it." I would like to add that interpretation of the Bible is a very difficult skill requiring years of study and training. It would hardly be realistic for the average unskilled person to simply "call it as he sees it."

Religious Education Teachers Scheduled

Ithaca — Religious Education Programs are back in full swing for the second half of the year in the area. Interesting additions to Immaculate Conception's program is the Pre-School class for 3-5-year-olds. They are using the preschool text Happy Together.

Pre-School teachers are Mrs. Margaret Dennis, lead teacher, Mrs. Teresa Hsie, Mrs. Anne Baker, Miss Cheryl Linscott, Miss Mary Pearson and Miss Elizabeth Barret; grade one teachers are Mrs. Pat Hurst and Mrs. Alice Pempel; grade two teacher is Sister Marianna; grade three teachers are Miss Mary Ann Kelly, Miss Noreen Walsh, and Miss Betsy Dexter.

Grade four teacher is Sister Anthony; grade five teachers are

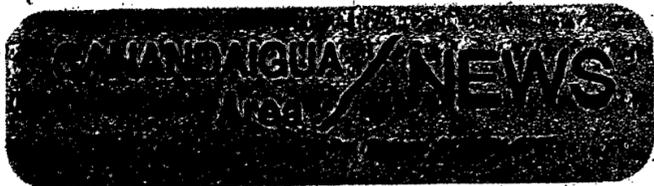
Mrs. Alex Lipsky and Mrs. Lois Catia, grade six teachers are Miss Nancy Arnold and Miss Dorothy Houbihan.

Newfield release time teachers are Mrs. Sharon Kelly, Sister Marianna, Mrs. Carolyn Gedding, Sister Anthony, Mrs. Kathy Schwoeble and Sister Clare.

Brooktondale teachers include Mrs. Joanna Bard, Sister Marianna, Mrs. Anne Armstrong, Mrs. Elaine Lampan, Mrs. Pat O'Branski and Sister Clare.

Ithaca Jr. High teachers include Miss Jane Reed, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Erb, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Schickel, Sister Kathleen, Sister Clare, and Gene Rybeck.

Newfield Jr. High teachers are Father Robert Beligotti and Jane Classen.



Canandaigua — Mini courses are being held at St. Mary's in connection with the high school CCD program. Four of these courses will be held on Wednesday evenings and four on Sunday. Subjects range from abortion to police and community relations. Guests will conduct the sessions and adults are invited.

Courier-Journal

Canandaigua — The roller skating parties held at St. Mary's in recent years have been so popular that parents of students wanted one of their own. Their wish has been granted. In addition to the two parties scheduled Tuesday, Jan. 30 — one at 2:30 p.m. for grades K-4 and one at 6 p.m. for grades 5-8, there will be a party at 8:30 p.m. for parents.



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Sibley's

Sibley's downtown open tuesday and thursday 'til 9 p.m. suburban stores monday thru saturday 'til 9:30. Wednesday, January 24, 1973