



Supper-Dance

Making final plans for a continental champagne supper dance are members of Our Lady of Mercy High School Parent's Association, (l.-r.) Mrs. Henry C. Lane, Mrs. William J. Heneghan, Mrs. Nicholas A. Nicosia, Sister Mary Bryan and Mrs. Saverio P. Vasile. The event will be held March 10 at the Rochester Club and Len Hawley will provide music from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. The money raised will go to the school.

FR. LOUIS HOHMAN

The Open Window



Q. Would you please discuss the procedures that existed in certain dioceses of this country whereby divorced and remarried persons were granted the privilege of receiving the Sacraments by the local bishops in certain instances. I understand that Rome has "clamped down" on these so-called "good conscience" cases and they are not permitted any more. Would you please give me some background information on these procedures? Thank you.

A. The information I have at hand on the procedures in other dioceses is second-hand but I have reason to believe it is accurate. One diocese to set up such a plan (the first, I believe) was the Diocese of Portland, Oregon. The reason given was that they were "trying to bring Canon Law and pastoral practice together". The Portland plan allowed Catholics involved in a second marriage (when the spouse of a first, apparently valid marriage was still alive) to receive the Sacraments under the following conditions: that the petitioning Catholic must deem his existing marriage stable and binding; that the risk of scandal arising from the return of the petitioner to Communion must be minimal; that the petitioner must "in good conscience" believe that his former marriage was invalid. His reasons for this must be of the kind which cannot be proven in a Church court; e.g. lack of intent, inability to make a rational contract.

Many dioceses adopted similar plans and the last one was Baton Rouge. In August of last

year, Cardinal Krol, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, following a Vatican directive forbidding all practices "contrary to Catholic discipline," put at least a temporary end to all these plans.

Cardinal Krol pointed out that the question of admitting divorced and remarried Catholics to the Sacraments was under study by the Holy See and by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pastoral Research and Practices. He said, "It would be rash to conclude that a study must necessarily lead to change of principles or procedure, or that a study precludes the possibility of reaffirmation of current discipline. Moreover, the Holy See has made it clear . . . that since the discipline is of interest to the entire Church, dioceses are not to introduce procedures that are contrary to present discipline."

Cardinal Krol concluded, "The problem is not local to any one diocese or nation. It is a problem found in the entire Church. There are no facile solutions, and reputable theologians and canonists acknowledge the complexity and gravity of the problem and do not venture any ready solutions. Bishops, motivated by deep pastoral concern for people in difficult marriage situations, continue to explore the question, without presuming to hold out hopes — which could well be disappointed — of finding an easy or early answer."

Not much help, I'm afraid. We'll just have to wait and see.



Fresh Air Spokesman

Fresh Air Fund spokesman James C. Viggiani (center) recently addressed the St. Pius X Holy Name Society on the 95-year-old fund which gives New York City children vacations away from the city. Present at the meeting were (l.-r.) Tom Corcoran, George V. Riley, Jr., Bill Carney and Che Palaban.

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