



ON THE RIGHT SIDE
Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

Father Kress and I made our post-Easter visit to Father Carron of Geneseo for lunch, and afterward to the Trappist Abbey at Piffard for devotion. While the abbey is only three miles from Geneseo it is within the parish limits of Piffard, so Father Wedow is the canonical pastor of the Monks, and Father Reynolds the Emeritus. Father Jerome Burke, a Scripture scholar, served as Abbot for seven years, then resigned and became a hermit on the abbey grounds. The next day I read a 25-page pamphlet on JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES by Will Whalen, and wondered: "Has any Witness found his way to the Hermit Abbot Emeritus to convert him?"

There is hardly a person who has not been accosted by Witnesses. There is hardly a lay person I know who has the haziest idea what they teach. A general impression is held that the sect is composed of zealous crack-pots who hold weird doctrines, and who annoyingly continue to ring door bells to persuade the world to join up. Older people remember the phonograph lugging days of the Witnesses. As techniques change in many selling jobs, so have the techniques of the Witnesses.

I am convinced that most Catholics who involve themselves in ecumenism have never studied the Vatican II DECREE ON ECUMENISM. Ecumenist zealots have terribly damaged the ecumenical movement, but not irreparably. One beautiful paragraph in the Decree reads: "We must come to understand the outlook of our separated brothers. Study is absolutely required for this, and should be pursued with fidelity to truth and in a spirit of good will. Catholics need to acquire a more adequate understanding of the distinctive doctrines of our separated brothers, as well as their own history, spiritual and liturgical life, their religious psychology

and cultural background." (Ecumenism: #9.)

Briefly here are a few notes on the WITNESSES:

Growth: in 1930 there were 50,000 members; in 1970 there were 1,300,000.

Theology: Witnesses are not Reformation Protestants. The great Protestant principle they do take is: "The Bible only," as they interpret the Bible. Catholics and Eastern Orthodox Christians teach: "The Bible and tradition, as taught by the Church."

Witnesses oppose Catholicism, liquor, Protestantism, psychiatry, Mothers Day, Christmas observances, etc. They teach Satan rules the world and especially organized religion, business and politics. Therefore they will not serve in the armed forces of any nation, salute the flag; become active in politics, labor unions or other secular organizations. Their world is centered around the local Kingdom Hall (parish). They flatly deny the Blessed Trinity. They assert that Jesus was once known as Michael the Archangel, became a perfect man, and is now "Chief executive of officer Jehovah."

Will Whalen has written THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD: WHAT OTHERS BELIEVE (50c). He has written many 25-page pamphlets on several denominations (15c). I would make a plea to those involved in adult education - priests, Brothers, Sisters, CCD teachers, those who tend the parish pamphlet rack - to furnish these Whalen pamphlets. They are published by Claretian Pamphlets, 221 West Madison Street, Chicago 60606. The Claretians will send an eight-page folder of their publications to anyone on request.

"Do it now! There is danger in delay."



THE OPEN WINDOW
Fr. Louis Hohman

[This is a continuation of the last two weeks' discussion, in which Father Hohman answered questions about birth control.]

Q. In the Gospel for Feb. 22, Jesus says, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church... I will entrust to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you shall declare unlawful on earth shall be held unlawful in heaven." [Matt. 16:18-19] Do you have the right to elect to say that Christ's followers do not have to pay heed to what the Pope has declared?

A. In no way do I imply or say that as followers of Jesus Christ we do not have to pay heed to what the Pope has declared. To ignore him or to simply write him off because we disagree would be the height of rashness. But it is immensely important that we do not simply lump together everything the Pope has said and declare to the world that "followers of Jesus Christ" must accept it simply because he said it. The Pope himself would not subscribe to that.

Popes have contested the right to say that the earth revolves around the sun. Popes have said that error has no rights. Popes have said that union of Church

PILGRIMAGE

Clyde - A pilgrimage to the shrines of Canada is being arranged for July 28-August 3. Reservations may be made with Margaret Colasurdo, 172 Lock St., Clyde, N.Y. 14433.

and state is an ideal to be striven for.

Would I or anyone else be wrong to say that those Popes were wrong? If a Pope can be wrong about astronomy, can he not also be wrong about what is natural or unnatural in the functions of the human body? Is a heart transplant natural or unnatural?

As far as speaking infallibly, the Pope has done that only once in my lifetime and only once in the last 110 years. We are told that we must give obedient assent. Frankly I do not understand what that means. Where does it begin and end? Which pronouncements have more weight and which less? What is the difference between an infallible pronouncement and an encyclical or a speech to a doctor's convention in Rome?

I do not wish to be disloyal to the Holy Father in any degree. He is a primary principle of unity and stability in the Church. But I just wish someone would explain to me what the limits of papal teaching are, what is the role of bishops, clergy and laity in the magisterium, how do we share with him that role and when are we being loyal or not being loyal. Shall I have you tell me, or Hans Kung tell me, or the Pope tell me? Which shall it be?

The whole question is a real problem which cries for solution, and not a cut and dried matter, as you seem to think. Maybe you can get a better answer elsewhere. If you do, please let me know.

Bills Before State Senate
On Contraceptive Law

Albany - Two bills to permit the sale of contraceptives to children under 16 have been voted out by the State Senate Rules Committee and are now before the Senate.

The bills would permit children of any age (presently limited to 16) to purchase contraceptive condoms;

Permit contraceptive condoms to be sold to anyone and be displayed for sale inside and outside (presumably in a coin-operated machine) a pharmacy.

The State Catholic Committee has registered strong opposition

to the bills (S.6119 and S.6120) as promoting promiscuity and as "a direct attack and a corruption of young and innocent children in general, and a flagrant attack on the family structure."

"Both bills," the committee said in a letter to every legislator, "circumvent parental right and responsibilities."

The committee stated:

"Making contraceptives available to young children will breed promiscuity. Boys and girls look forward to the day when they can reasonably expect a happy stable marriage and raise their own children.

"These dreams will not come

true for many teenagers who are engaging in sexual activity now. They have not developed emotional maturity and capacity for self-restraint. This has been an important cause of early breakups of marriage.

"Permitting the sale of contraceptives by persons other than pharmacists will indirectly cause greater sale of contraceptives to persons under 16 years of age. Since a pharmacist is a professionally trained person he or she is less likely to breach the law by selling contraceptives to young and innocent children of less than 16 years.

"We urge," the committee concluded, "that all bills of this nature presently before the legislature be defeated."

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RUMMAGE Sale: Parking Lot, 923 Portland Ave., May 18th & 19th.
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