



TOWARD TOMORROW
Fr. Henry Atwell

Quietly but regularly for the past five years, representatives officially appointed by the American Catholic bishops have met for study and discussion with representatives of the various other U.S. Christian churches.

There have also been similar meetings at the international level.

"But the gap between theological discussion and pastoral practice remains undeservedly wide; and pastors, religious educators, and lay leaders are frequently found unaware of the achievements of the doctrinal dialogues," writes Atonement Father Ralph Thomas of the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute.

Earlier this month, Father Thomas arranged a week-long workshop to bridge that gap. Participants heard both the current theories and the practical applications of these official dialogues to date. Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians and Methodists were the chief participants with the Catholics who sponsored the workshop.

All speakers admitted that far more could be done at the parish level than is now being done — not just in improved neighborly attitudes (which were never outlawed) but in actual cooperative ministries and rites.

It is increasingly apparent that, except for church governance, there is little difference in the beliefs and attitudes of Christians

Priest Denies Anti-Semitism

Detroit [RNS] — Still fiery Father Charles E. Coughlin, famed radio priest of the 1930's and critic of the New Deal, insists he is not anti-Jewish or pro-Nazi and hopes that a biography, now in the works, may clear things up. Father Coughlin, who also published the magazine "Social Justice" in the pre-World War II years, has chosen Farley Clinton, writer for the traditionalist Catholic weekly, The Wanderer, to write the biography.

The 82-year-old priest denies that he is anti-Jewish, as critics have charged. "Christ and the Apostles were Jews," he said. "And the first 33 Popes were Jews."

Father Coughlin said that during his years of broadcasting and publishing a lay person on his staff sent scurrilous telegrams in his name without his knowledge. He said he was "tortured" by that unnamed person for almost two years.

who are members of "main line" denominations. And the differences that do exist are really far more theoretical than actual. Even the Catholic concept of the primary importance of the Pope doesn't very much affect the average Catholic in day to day living. If anything, many Jews and Protestants were far more enthusiastic than most Catholics when Pope John convened the Vatican Council or when Pope Paul came to speak at the United Nations or visit the Greek Patriarch in Jerusalem.

The pity is, however, that both Catholics and Protestants still see each other in terms of the obsolete stereotypes of long past years. There are, of course, survivals of these old stereotypes but they are, I am convinced, a shrinking minority.

The most effective antidote to this stereotyping is simple, straightforward getting acquainted with one another. The lovely little song, "Getting to Know You," from the play and movie "The King and I" should be the theme song for all churches for the next year or two.

Recently I have had personal experience in seeing this verified.

Rev. Gene Ferguson, pastor of Trinity Methodist Church, Rochester, and president of Genesee Ecumenical Ministries, spoke at St. Agnes Church, Avon, and parishioners were deeply touched by his message of trust in the constant presence and care of God. Then within the week, Lutheran Pastor Manfred Lassen, director of Livingston County Coalition of Churches, joined me to celebrate the wedding of a young couple. In both instances, we shared a faith and a hope which was far deeper and far more extensive than any remaining differences which loomed so large in the past.

This thought was expressed by Dr. Paul C. Empie, one of the participants in the official Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue of the past two years: "Perhaps the most important outcome of the dialogues thus far has been the removal of many understandings and consequently the realization that there exists today a greater doctrinal harmony between the traditions than had been previously supposed."

This fact should be made known to the people in the pews, not just by an announcement in some religious journal, but by clear and dramatic demonstration in actions that speak louder than any words.

Altar Breads Shrinking As Wheat Prices Rise

By PAT PETRASKE

The current economic squeeze has affected one more aspect of daily life by hitting what is considered the most important element in the celebration of the Mass. Increasing prices have forced a decrease in the size of whole wheat altar bread at St. Mary's in Ontario from the one-and-one-half inch size down to a half inch in diameter.

Father Charles Langworthy, pastor of St. Mary's, received notification of the reduction in size from the Sisters of the Cross in Springfield, Mass. who produce the altar bread. The letter stated that this was a measure to prevent further increase in prices.

Both white flour and whole wheat flour have gone up \$1 per 100 lb. bag, according to Father Langworthy. He indicated that

there have been several small increases in price for the altar breads.

looks more like bread," he said. Every two weeks St. Mary's orders 3,000 Communion hosts.

"Altar bread is a sizeable item which the lay people don't understand. It is cheaper to use white flour bread but the whole wheat seems more symbolic; it

He explained that the size of the host is arbitrary and the white flour breads are about the size of a nickel. The large Mass hosts will continue to remain the same size.

BISHOP COWLEY DIES

Minneapolis [RNS] — Auxiliary Bishop Leonard P. Cowley, 60, former pastor of the Basilica of St. Mary and of St. Olaf Church, the two downtown Minneapolis Roman Catholic parishes, died here Aug. 18. He had stepped down as Basilica pastor in April following a protracted illness and took up residence at St. Mary's Home in St. Paul.

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