

TOWARD TOMORROW

Fr. Henry Atwell

Most Americans probably have the opinion that the Supreme Court has banned the Bible, prayer and all religion from the nation's public schools. It hasn't. We have.

Uninformed teachers, unconcerned parents and unaware clergymen have failed to understand the Court's invitation to bring religion into the public schools.

Religious study programs are already going on legally in hundreds of public schools in 27 states, most notably in Florida and Pennsylvania.

Justice Tom Clark, speaking for the Court majority in the 1963 decision which forbade Bible reading as a religious practice in public schools, said, "... it might well be said that one's education is not complete without the study of comparative religion or the history of religion and its relationships to the advancement of civilization. Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible, or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistent with the First Amendment."

James V. Panoch, coordinator for religious studies in public education, a joint program of Religious Heritage of America, Inc., and Wright State University at Dayton, Ohio, lists eight avenues legally open at the present time:

1. The public school may sponsor the study of religion but not the practice of religion.
2. The public school may expose students to all religious views but may not impose any particular view.

Pre-School Workshop Scheduled

A special workshop for persons interested in pre-school education will be held Saturday, Sept. 15, at Holy Family Parish from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The program is sponsored by the Rochester Diocesan Pre-School Association and will feature a presentation of Awakenings, a special course for pre-schoolers published by Paulist Press. A slight fee is charged for the workshop. For further information call Mrs. Inez Ringholz, (716) 254-9090.

SETON SHOP

The Seton Shop at 151 Genesee St. reopens today with next-to-new clothing, jewelry and household items. Hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday through Friday; 10-1 Saturday. Shop profits go to St. Mary's Hospital. Mrs. E.H. Tallmadge is in charge.

3. The public school's approach to religion is to be one of instruction, not one of indoctrination.
4. The function of the public school is to educate about all religions, not to convert to any one religion.
5. The public school's approach to religion is to be academic, not devotional.
6. The public school should study what all people believe, but should not teach a pupil what he or she should believe.
7. The public school should strive for student awareness of all religions, but not press for student acceptance of any one religion.
8. The public school should seek to inform students about various beliefs, but not pressure them to conform to any one belief.

Text books and teacher manuals are already available for courses to be taught, well within the Supreme Court's limitations.

Catholics especially should provide informed leadership to initiate such courses of study in the public schools of their area. The Catholic school system of Rochester enrolls only about 35 per cent of the Catholic pupils of the city, leaving 65 per cent of Catholic pupils to attend public schools and, even in parishes with the best of religious instructional programs, all will agree that pupils could still benefit from added instructional opportunities.

Protestant parents are also increasingly concerned about the vast number of youngsters, so many utterly unaffiliated with any church, who are growing up as religious illiterates.

Here, I think, is a challenge for all those Americans who cherish the religious heritage which is at the root of our freedoms to arrange for youngsters in our public schools to learn about it. Wide-awake parents and school officials in other areas of the country are already doing this. I can't see why we can't do it here.

Mission Church Closed

The mission church of St. Matthias in Atlanta, Steuben County, unused during the past Summer, is in the legal process of dissolution as a corporation.

The 36-year-old frame building likely will be put on the market when court formalities end, Father Robert Smith reported last week.

As pastor of St. Januarius in Naples, Father Smith had the care of the mission, which lately had an adult congregation of 22, he said. The pastor celebrated Mass there once a week and necessarily was involved also with a second board of trustees and maintenance of separate financial records.

"From a personnel point of view, there was no other answer," than to close the mission, according to a spokesman for the diocesan personnel board, who affirmed Father Smith's position also that it was "economically not feasible" to continue the mission.

Minutes of the St. Matthias trustee meetings indicate that liquidation of the parish had been discussed from time to time over the past decade, Father Smith said, and last Spring "everybody seemed agreeable" to the closing. The final Mass Palm Sunday was followed by a farewell party.

Atlanta, near the Steuben-Ontario county line, is roughly six miles from Wayland, Conochocton and Naples. It is in the Wayland school district, and the religious education of the St. Matthias children is taken care of in Wayland.

The mission was founded in 1914, and a new church was built in 1937. Naples parishioners and summer residents, given a choice

between a 10 a.m. Mass at St. Januarius and an 8:30 at St. Matthias, frequently swelled the Sunday crowd at the latter church, but the institution of the Saturday evening Mass changed that, the pastor observed.

Father Smith, who has been in Naples for the past two years, is a member of that community's school board and serves the diocesan regional structure as coordinator for the Ontario-Yates-Wayne region.

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Longs Celebrate 56th Anniversary

Mr. and Mrs. Edward A. Long of Masseth Street, lifelong members of Holy Family Church, celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary Sept. 8.

They have five daughters, 12 grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Mr. Long retired in 1964 after 43 years with Delco.

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Anyone of the following will be glad to supply you with additional information.



Interior of one of our Mission Chapels, Lake Arthur, New Mexico.

- Joseph L. Cimino, 131 Britton Rd. 865-1260
- John G. Bittner, 120 Versailles Rd. 266-2149
- John Lloyd, 65 Glendale Pk. 254-2394
- Robert Stich, 31 Archer Rd. 889-1543
- George J. Schultz, 200 Avenue D 266-0367

- Richard G. Korn, 157 Dikeman Rd. 334-5859
- Emil G. Eckert, 150 Turpin St. 467-2741
- Clement Schlueter, 54 Corley Dr. 467-8103
- Robert Buck, 36 Bismark Terr. 544-5954
- Arthur Senger, 1074 Joseph Ave. 467-7040
- Frank Gross, 28 Glasser St. 436-1387
- Louis Tomasso, 8 Kestrel St. 458-6216
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