



# ON THE RIGHT SIDE Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

Paul Clemens, a sophomore at Bishop Kearney High School, Rochester, approached me after Sunday Mass. "Father, our religion class has a special Mass occasionally and I have been delegated to get a priest. Would you come at 8:20 Friday, September 28?" Despite his youth I was cautious. Knowing of some Masses performed in contempt for the liturgical and canonical regulations of the Church in some places; and having experienced personally a few gimmick liturgies, I hesitated. But his innocent eyes compelled. "Why, I'd be glad to, Paul."

The youth was an interesting companion during our 11-mile ride to the school. He prepared me well by his own ingenuousness for the nice group of some 30 boys: all 15 and 16 years old, who formed the congregation.

The very location of the Mass was auspicious. It was a small, bright chapel where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved for adoration by faculty and students. It had a decent altar of sacrifice. The school schedule was such that Mass had to be ended in 30 minutes. I had just read with appreciation McQuaid's Father William O'Malley's article on "The Mass and Teenagers" in the Sept. 26 Courier. Some of Fr. O'M's suggestions are implemented at Kearney.

The gimmick liturgists have worked with some success to Protestantize our sacrificial banquet. Since I have shared common chapels with devout Protestant ministers for 12 of my 38 priestly years, I am quite familiar with the worship services. One of the disconcerting things in many Protestant worship services is this: if a hymn has nine stanzas, the entire nine are doggedly sung without omitting a semi-colon. In Catholic worship this drives me up the wall. Many-stanza hymns sung at Mass are devotionally deadening.

However at the Kearney Mass, just enough of the hymns — one stanza or two — was sung to effect a smooth integration with the liturgical actions of the Mass. My sophomores were not exactly the Kearney Choral Group, but what they lacked in tonal quality they made up in virile earnestness.

Religion teacher Mr. Bernard McDonnell, a man around thirty, and of unpretentious devotion, was Master of Liturgy. One youngster was assigned to read the whole 48 verses of St. Matthew, Chapter 5. I wondered if the attention span of Kearney students is preternaturally prodigious. This was followed by a dialogue commentary among the students, tactfully developed by their teacher. The students made remarkably good responses.

Finally Mr. McD. nodded at me, indicating: "You may go on with the Mass now." Little did he know my character. Like my patron, the Apostle, I stood and spoke. "There are a few things I wish to say. I have 21 nieces and nephews and 82 grand-nieces and grand-nephews. I knew, many years ago that I could not afford a Christmas gift for each so decided to send the Catholic Digest to each family. Of all the magazines 'for the family' it seems best for interest, information, inspiration." This advertisement was followed by a bit of seed-sowing: "In the Sept. issue is an

### DEEP FRIED BOOGIE

**Bath** — A youth dance will be sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Squires of Bath, Oct. 20 with music by the 'Deep Fried Boogie.' For more details, contact the rectory of Matt Yaninas.

article by Will Whalen on The Witnesses of Jehovah. Their scriptural interpretations are weird; but if we would use their zeal and methods to spread the Faith, the world would quickly become gloriously Catholic, fulfilling the will of Christ that all may be one." To imbed the seed firmly I presented the Catholic Digest to Mr. McD, saying: "I hope you will introduce the Witness techniques to your students."

Since I hate pokiness in liturgy, and time was pressing, we used Eucharistic Prayer II and ended on time. The students were unaffectedly devout. Mr. McD. was an edification. I left Kearney thinking "Many parents of students in some Catholic high schools express dismay and helplessness about the heterodoxy in the schools. I should be glad to recommend Kearney, with its Rock of Peter traditions preserved by the Christian Brothers and the school Sisters of Notre Dame. And I do hope Jesuit Father O'Malley's articles on The Mass for Teenagers will be printed in pamphlet form, and spread. They are a triple jewel."

# St. Paul Priests Seek Time To Comply with Rome Directive

**St. Paul [RNS]** — A number of pastors in the Catholic Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis have expressed unhappiness with the Vatican directive to end the practice of allowing children to receive First Communion before First Confession.

And while they are accepting the directive as policy that must be implemented, some of them are calling for more time in which to make the change back to the old pattern.

About half the 215 parishes of the archdiocese were following the new practice when Archbishop Leo J. Byrne wrote the clergy in July asking that reversion to the arrangement of requiring confession before First Communion begin with the 1973-74 school year.

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops voted last fall to ask for a two-year extension of the experimental program, which, according to reports, was being utilized in about half of the 160 U.S. dioceses.

Two Vatican bodies, the Congregation for the Clergy, headed by Cardinal John Wright, an American, and the Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, headed by

Cardinal Antonio Samore, denied the U.S. bishops' request. They ordered a return to the former practice of requiring confession before First Communion.

The rationale behind the experimental program is that children can understand the Eucharist at an earlier age than that needed to grasp the concept of sin. Also, many clergy, parents and educators believe that children gain a deeper appreciation of the sacraments when they are presented separately and at different levels.

Several pastors in the St. Paul

archdiocese indicated it would be difficult to revise their religious education programs for the coming school year. And six parishes in Bloomington and Richfield petitioned Archbishop Byrne for additional time to revert back to the original practice. The extension was granted.

Auxiliary Bishop Raymond A. Lucker, episcopal vicar for education, said the practice of First Communion before confession is not really an experiment. He said it had been practiced in several dioceses since Vatican II.

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