



THE OPEN WINDOW
Fr. Louis Hohman

Dear Father,

Maybe this isn't the right place to "dump" this but I'd like to get it off my chest anyway. I am a CCD teacher and I think I work hard preparing my classes as well as giving them. The physical set-up here is not the greatest, so there are noise problems, discipline problems, parents who bring their kids late, parents who don't bother at all when they don't feel like it. I suppose I shouldn't get easily discouraged but sometimes I wonder if it's all worth it. How much do these kids learn in that hour [if it really is an hour]? Isn't there some better way?

Tired and mixed up

Dear friend,

You may not believe it but my heart really goes out to you. Theoretically there is a better way (and in some cases it is a reality). If parents were people of deep faith, fairly knowledgeable of that faith, living it in such a way as to be an inspiration to their children, and devoted to bringing that faith into reality in the home, we wouldn't really need CCD except as a way of bringing the children into Christian community with their peers and

sharing it with them outside the home. Then the content of CCD would be entirely different.

But as long as parents think that religious education begins and ends on the church premises, as long as they abide by the rule, "Do as I say, not as I do," as long as they abdicate their prime responsibility as religious and moral teachers of their children, then we have an almost insurmountable problem.

But that doesn't mean we can quit. I don't know of any acceptable substitute for CCD at this stage of the game. I do know one thing — we must make a much stronger bid to educate our adults — and I mean that not so much intellectually as to build up their faith, make it meaningful and something they want very much to share with their children. Maybe all these years we have been starting at the wrong end of the line, ending up with adults who are juvenile in their knowledge of the faith and hence are unable to give anything to their own juveniles — the blind leading the blind. Don't give up — the Church needs people like you if only to witness to the fact that faith is the most important thing we have.



TOWARD TOMORROW
Fr. Henry Atwell

Harvey Cox, author of the still-selling "Secular City," has just authored another book, "The Seduction of the Spirit — The Use and Misuse of People's Religion." His newest theology, in the style of St. Augustine, is autobiographical and maybe religion would be more interesting if we got it that way more often.

He begins his story in 1935 when he was a lad of six in Malvern, Penn., a village of 1,555 people where everybody knew everybody else. He recalls that little Malvern had more churches than it had gas stations, more churches than saloons, more churches than restaurants — even more churches than all those other things put together, which, he admits, is cheating a little "because in those days we didn't have any restaurants." There were eight churches — two for blacks, one for Catholics and the five others ranged from quiet Quakers through the other "usual" denominations, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and Episcopalian.

The Cox family lived next door to St. Patrick's Church on one side and their own Baptist Church on the other. He says he's not sure whether his home location fated him to be the well-known ecumenical theologian he is today, but "I am sure," he writes, "that the location has a lot to do with the way I felt about the

DYSTROPHY DRIVE

Nine thousand volunteers will solicit funds door-to-door Sunday for the Rochester-Finger Lakes Chapter of the Muscular Dystrophy Association of America. They will cover these counties: Monroe, Ontario, Livingston, Wayne, Wyoming, Orleans, Genesee, Seneca, and Yates.

Money raised will provide services and buy equipment such as wheelchairs and braces for approximately 200 area patients afflicted with muscular dystrophy and allied neuro-muscular diseases. Services and equipment are furnished through a clinic maintained by MDA in Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester.

Catholic Church. The way I felt, and still feel, expressed in a few words, is, close, but outside."

"I grew up thinking there was something — I was never really sure what it was — different, either about me or about them," Cox says. Now as an adult, Cox continues, he thinks, "A lot of those differences . . . have to do not with doctrine but with feeling. And a lot of them root in our childhood." He then says, "What bothered me, I guess, was not the difference itself but that they seemed very sure they were right and . . . I don't think all that would have irked me so much except that I harbored a secret suspicion from a very early age that they just might be right."

Cox never went inside that Catholic church next door until his late teens, just an occasional peek through an opened door. "It makes me a little sad to think about that. I had cousins and playmates right on my street who were Catholics. They wore medals, crossed themselves now and then, went to confession on Saturday afternoons and, of course, didn't eat hamburger on Friday. But we never once visited each other's churches."

Much has happened for both Catholics and Protestants since Cox was a boy in 1935 in Malvern. But there are still barriers of misunderstanding and misinformation. Our own faith and loyalty must indeed be a weak thing if we can't trust ourselves to venture across another Christian's threshold.

Bishop Hickey Urges Nursing Home Program

Bishop Dennis W. Hickey last week called for the establishment of a group in the diocese to help meet the spiritual needs of people in nursing homes and boarding homes.

In a letter dated Nov. 6, the bishop said, "Over the past ten years there have been many changes in the church, but there have also been many changes in society that affect people's relationship to the church."

"Today," he said, "nursing homes are larger than ever before. Also, many more older people are in nursing homes than in former times."

The letter, addressed to prospective members of a task force which would prepare suggestions for liturgical and paraliturgical services, the bishop said "I think our apostolate to older persons in nursing and

Sr. James Named To Public Board

Sister James Lynch, coordinator of educational services for the diocese, has been selected to serve on the Board of Visitors of Monroe Developmental Services.

The Board of Visitors serves as an advisory and investigative body for the Monroe Developmental Services, which is part of the spectrum of community services available to persons with developmental disabilities residing in Monroe County. Membership of the board, which is yet to be completed, is designed to reflect the composition of the community.

Sister James believes she was nominated because of her experience in urban and poverty programs. Nominations are proposed by persons involved with the agency and are approved by the governor.

Each hospital and school in the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene is to establish a Board of Visitors whose duties include investigating any charges against the director and reported cases of patient and employee abuse, assessing faculty and patient care and insuring that the director and staff carry out their responsibilities to the patients.

Youth Workers Training Session

Volunteers in Partnership (VIP), a non-profit service group that matches juvenile probationers with adult volunteers, will have a training session for anyone with an interest in working with young people, on Saturday, Dec. 1, 9:30 a.m., at Asbury First United Methodist Church, 1050 East Ave.

VIP works with full cooperation of the Family Court in matching between youthful probationers and volunteers. For further information, contact Mrs. Cathy Lindsay at the VIP office, 454-7200, ext. 695. Box lunches will be made available at the training session.

boarding homes must be thoroughly reviewed for the sake of loving care for those who were loyal members of our parishes. We must make sure that the Church comes to them now and gives them all the help, sacramental, spiritual and personal, they need."

The bishop also noted the establishment of another group which is reviewing the adequacy of parish service to nursing homes and which will present a

proposal based on its findings to the Priests' Senate in February.

Helping with the organization of the groups are the Office of Liturgy at the Pastoral Center and the Office of Human Development.

It was noted that persons interested in the groups may contact Sister Judith Reger at OHD, (328-6400) or Mrs. Mary Dombek at the Liturgy Office (328-3210).

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