

There's a Priest Behind Mike Douglas' Cameras

BY JOHN DASH

In the murk and chill of the late winter dawn, two figures, dressed in black, stole from the shadows of the great Victorian manse, bearing between them the staggering weight of a stiff and lifeless human form. The figures found their way to the lip of a great cliff, and, grunting a hearty heave-ho, pitched their burden over the edge to plummet into the surging Genesee River.

One dusted his hands against his black robes and sighed, "I always was partial to a spectacular finale."

That lifeless form, it later turned out, was a particularly classic example of plaster religious grotesque: a saintly statue whose purple glare was once wont to startle even the most placid of visitors to the halls of St. Bernard's Seminary.

Nearly ten years later, the spectacular finale came close to home when the principal heave-hoer found himself circling over San Francisco's International Airport in a plane whose landing gear refused to lock down. And the passengers, staffers for The Mike Douglas Show, were requesting their associate producer to hear their confessions.

Father Vincent Maynard, former St. Bernard's seminarian, is now working his ministry in television — "the one social force that has caused the most catastrophic change in society in the last 25 years."

Under agreement with Bishop Louis E. Gelineau of Providence, R.I., Father Maynard has been studying media for several years, and since last Summer has been working with the nationally syndicated television program, The Mike Douglas Show.

Douglas (a Catholic himself), with an estimated viewing audience of between 20 million and 30 million people, is seen weekdays in Rochester over WOKR, Channel 13, at 10:30 a.m.

The strapping, 200 pound priest pre-interviews guests, researches and writes questions for them and



Father Maynard, center, confers with Douglas and Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, prior to the taping of the show. He advises the technical crew during taping.

Father Maynard took a break in his schedule last week to speak with the Courier-Journal on the directions his priestly life has taken, directions he admits, at the end of the day, are not as "terribly exciting" as they sound.

He feels he performs several kinds of ministry: "a direct ministry, in that as associate producer, I deal directly with the people who appear on the show, big names in the entertainment world as well as those who have information to give. Strangely, many people in show business are Catholic and while at first they're surprised to find a priest in this kind of business, most of them are later delighted to find out that a priest is involved in this, and oftentimes they get to talk to him on a religious level."

"Since," he says, "these people have some influence on other lives, and, in a way, I influence their lives, I feel, that's one kind of ministry."

The road to such a ministry was

not easily traversed. "Apologias," he confessed recently, "are difficult 'in transitu'; one must reserve them for retrospect." That statement was made in the midst of after-hours bargaining with a temperamental ex-comedian, a film editor and an ecologist. "I've long ago given up thinking that all this is terribly exciting," he said.

But it has its rewards: "One of the nice things about being in the secular world as a participant rather than an observer is the genuineness of feeling I can allow myself and others allow me.

"It's up to the individual," he notes, "to make a very definitive choice as to what his ministry should be by examining his own talents and goals in life and the kinds of needs he can answer."

He does not want to give the impression that priestly ministry should be so highly specialized, but that, in fact, it is.

Of his career he noted, "until you decide what you can do and how you can do it your effectiveness is going to be zero."

"It's funny," he mused, "but, all down through the ages there's always been a disassociation of sensibilities between entertainment and religion. Perhaps they are so often antithetical because they are really so very much alike. They both touch the spirit of man. Religion is entertainment when it makes you forget, and entertainment is religion when it makes you remember.

"One needs vision and judgment to survive.

"Maybe vision and judgment is what I'm learning most in my new job. I hope so. At least I begin to see that from the altar to the sound stage is not so long a journey as many might imagine."

Charismatics List Meetings

The following is a list of meetings and Masses sponsored by area Catholics in the Charismatic Renewal.

Pentecostal meetings are held on Mondays at the homes of: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dunning, 159 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Chili Center; Mr. and Mrs. Klaus Schulz, 156 N. Greece Rd., N. Greece.

On Tuesdays, Mr. and Mrs. William Buechel, 3681 Lake Avenue, Rochester; Mrs. John Sherry, 15 Starlite Dr., Rochester; Mr. and Mrs. Warren Lynch, Hamlin-Clarkson Town Line Rd., Hamlin.

On Wednesdays, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Mahaney, 479 Covewood Blvd., W. Webster.

On Thursdays, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Hauser, 1570 Culver Rd.,

Father Hoffman January Visits

The following are the Parish Council meetings Father Douglas Hoffman, diocesan director of Pastoral Ministry, will visit during January.

Holy Family (Auburn); Pastoral Council Formation Committee (St. Stephen's Library, Geneva); Our Lady of Lourdes (Elmira); Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (Rochester); St. James (Rochester); St. Januarius (Naples); Our Lady of Good Counsel (Rochester); St. Patrick's (Owego).

Rochester; St. Charles Borromeo Church, Rochester.

On Saturday evening, Mr. and Mrs. John Donnelly, 9 Ellicot St., Rochester; Mr. and Mrs. James Reid, 113 Amity St., Spencerport; Mr. and Mrs. Donald Wollschlegel, 350 N. Winton Rd., Rochester.

Weekly prayer meetings are held at St. Peter and Paul Church at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and at St. Theodore Church at 8 p.m. on Mondays.

Mass is celebrated at 8 p.m. every First Friday at St. Lawrence Church and at 7:30 p.m. on the last Thursday of the month at St. Charles Borromeo Church.

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Fisher Offers Courses

Children's Literature, Antiques, and Cable Television Seminar — are among three of the non-credit courses slated for St. John Fisher College's continuing education program, beginning this month. Students may register for continuing education courses by mail, by writing or calling for the appropriate forms from Fisher's

continuing education office (586-4140, ext. #365, 366), or they may register in person at the College during regular business hours, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. In addition, evening registration will be available Jan. 10 through Jan. 18, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Kearney Hall. Classes begin on Monday, Jan. 14.



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