



Spaghetti!

Those real Italian cooks at St. Francis Xavier are getting ready again for the annual spaghetti dinner in the parish hall, 316 Bay. Left to right are Joe Mazzulo, Chic Polizzi, Ida Giglia and Barbara LaBella. The time is Sunday, Feb. 24, 1-6 p.m.; the price, \$2 for adults, \$1 for children.

Pope Paul 'Surprised' By Canon Law Critic

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul has expressed dismay at recent criticisms by a leading canon lawyer of the Church's marriage laws.

"We cannot hide our surprise at some expressions of criticism, excessive in form and not completely justified in substance, of the present canon law on marriage — criticism by a most authoritative person in a place and on an occasion previously always dignified by most

respectful and objective language," said the pontiff.

The Pope was referring to criticisms voiced in a speech by Prof. Pietro Agostino d'Avack, a former president of Rome State University and professor of canon law accredited to the Sacred Roman Rota, the Church's highest tribunal in marriage cases.

Speaking at an audience with members of the Rota on Jan. 31, marking the opening of the

tribunal's new judicial year, Pope Paul alluded to the "episode" as "well-known," and remarked that after the "negative thoughts" in the first part of the professor's speech, "positive thoughts" were expressed in the second part.

"It seems to us," the pontiff said, "that the values expressed in the second part of the discourse rectified, rather than confirmed, those expressed in the first part."

"Thus," he added, "the concluding judgment on the merits of the present canon law on matrimony is still worthy of confidence today, even though, as we hope — in conformity with the doctrines of Vatican II — these norms will soon be formulated in a more complete and modern way."

Prof. d'Avack delivered a major address on Jan. 29 at a ceremony in the Lateran Palace opening the Church's judicial year. Cardinal Ugo Poletti, Pope Paul's vicar for Rome, presided at the session.

The canon lawyer described the Church's rules on marriage as archaic and materialistic, discriminatory against women, and ridden with sexual taboos. In particular, he criticized the church legislation for "completely disregarding" love as a key factor in marriage.

He said that the Church laws disregarded the personal feelings of married couples and even their human dignity.

The Church's concept of marriage, he said, was based on the patriarchal family of agricultural societies, with their stress on reproduction, and added:

"In a world where contemporary social customs called for birth control and legalization of abortion, it is anachronistic and even grotesque to continue to affirm that the marriage bond is based on reproduction alone, especially now, when population increases are being recognized as posing serious problems."

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We don't have it in the Church. If we want it, all of us will have to pay the price of running the risk that those who are dissatisfied with us will want our removal. It may not be a chance we want to take.

Accountability will come eventually. But not tomorrow. Or the next day.

Or even next week.

One of the magic words one hears in the Church today is "accountability." We picked it up from the world outside, where by now it doesn't mean anything at all. It doesn't mean much in the Church either, but that doesn't stop it from being used as a substitute for thought and real change.

Pastors are accountable to their priests, we are told. Bishops are accountable to their pastors. Priests are accountable to their people. Leaders of religious communities are accountable to their members. Parish councils are accountable to the rest of the parish. Everyone is accountable to everyone else.

Mostly this is all baloney, not to use harsher language.

Accountability, if it means anything at all, means that a person can be removed for doing a bad job. I am hard put to think of anyone who has been removed in the Church from any position of importance in recent years for doing a bad job. Indeed, such a sanction is unthinkable. For all the talk about accountability you take what you get and like it.

A priest is supposed to be accountable to his parish. But suppose he decides to build a huge rectory or a brand new church and gets it by the bishop. Suppose then that he goes wildly over the budget estimate. Are his people able to call him to an accounting, to demand that he stop, to insist that he be replaced? Not very likely; or if they do it will be long after the building is finished, the money spent, the debt piled high.

Let's move up higher. To leave aside the present, any brief reading of Church history shows that in past years (even in this

THE CHURCH 1974

THE OPEN WINDOW

Father Louis Mahoney

Dear Father,

Is turning the other cheek the only behavior when a teenager in a CCD class breaks and pelts crayons around the room, endangering every other child's right for safety? What happens when he puts someone's eye out? Turn the other cheek?

The teacher claims he will only learn gentleness, goodness and kindness from example of the same. The class is a waste of time because it is bedlam, but it is required. ["Every good Catholic will send his child for proper instruction."]

Sincerely,
A mother

religious education classes are run. That is, if we insist that parents are by right the primary educators of their children. What we need is greater effective involvement of parents in this whole area.

If nothing can be done about the situation I think you would have a perfect right to remove your child from religious instruction and do the best you can for him or her at home. But I would say that is a last resort. Try to take the other steps first. You might be surprised at the outcome, especially if you can get the support of other parents who are sending their children to that class. Good luck.

Dear mother,

Did you see the article in the Democrat and Chronicle a week or so ago in which Doctor Spock, the famous baby doctor admitted that he was wrong in counseling permissiveness in the raising of children. He strongly urged discipline. What a turnaround!

The teacher you refer to has a gross misconception of kindness and goodness. When a child, even in his teens, behaves like a baby, he must be treated like a baby, if after talking to him about his responsibility to others, he insists on being irresponsible. His parents should be apprised of the situation and asked to take appropriate steps to change his attitude. If they refuse he should be removed from the class.

I do not think, however, that this column is the right forum for settling the problem of this child and the teacher. As painful as this may be, the matter should be taken to the education committee and then, if necessary, to the parish council and the pastor. The parents should have the right to decide the proper disciplinary policies for teachers and should have an important voice in how

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