

OUR PARISH COUNCIL

Suppose a large parish in the United States which had a mixture of both rich and poor, were to declare a policy of favoring the poor.

What would your reaction be?

What would be the reaction of the parishioners? Would the parish become hopelessly divided?

Of course, I am hard put to think of many parishes that have such a mixture of extreme wealth and poverty as they have in many Latin American countries. The United States generally separates the rich and the poor and the white and the black, quite efficiently.

Holy Name Parish in Lima, Peru, is such a parish with great wealth and many poor. There are about 10,000 people in the parish. About half of the people are among the rich or upper class. The rest of the people belong to the servant class or are "guardians," people without permanent homes who move from new house to new house. They guard the house from thieves and looters to "provide" themselves with a roof over their heads until the new owners move in.

Holy Name Parish is about 10 years old. It has been staffed by the Franciscan friars of the Holy Name Province since its beginning.

Perhaps the best picture of the parish can be had by comparing the 17-room friary with a house directly across the street from it.

The friary houses the staff of two priests and a brother, serves as a vacation house for the friars from Bolivia, and provides meeting rooms for various parish groups and activities.

The house across the street is ultramodern, very upper class, and not yet occupied, except for the guardian and his family.

The watchman and his family live in the garage with empty cement bags as their fourth wall. They have no water or sewage facilities, and they use wood fires for cooking.

Cardinal Heenan Urges N. Ireland Compromise

London (RNS) — Compromise in strife-torn Northern Ireland was urged by Cardinal John Heenan, archbishop of Westminster, in a strongly worded sermon at the cathedral.

He called on the people of the British Isles to become increasingly intolerant of "those who refuse to accept peace save on their own terms."

"Whether they call themselves loyalists or republicans, unionists or nationalists, they are all Irishmen. There must be compromise," he said.

Cardinal Heenan, whose congregation included Ireland's Ambassador Donal O'Sullivan, said there was everything to gain by peace and everything to lose by civil war. The misery of the poor can be alleviated only if authorities turn their attention from civic defense to social security.

ARMY SPORTS CLINIC

Some of the U.S. Army's top athletes will conduct a free clinic in soccer, swimming, and golf at East High School, 8 a.m. April 9. Army All-Stars Casey Wilkins (golf), Joe Chiavaro (soccer), and Dave Garretson (swimming) will be on hand to give free instructions in their sports. For further information call Sgt. Bob Raffiani, 107 State St., 232-7424.

Some time ago, the priests, sisters and parish council of Holy Name Parish drew up a "linea," which set the following policy:

"Holy Name Parish declares its clear options for the poor, the margined and the oppressed of this society, following the explicit indications of the Latin American and especially the Peruvian bishops. This option, as lived in Moterico (section of Lima), means on the one hand a consciousness of responsibility for the existing structures, and on the other hand preaching by example, service and word, the need for a change of these structures as well as a liberation of the oppressed to the more human levels of existence."

There has been some strong reactions against the policy. Some of the wealthy have transferred to other parishes.

A priest who had a temporary assignment at Holy Name reports:

"The parish is certainly different from when I first was here during my Bolivian days. There is a more social orientation than before, and an even greater emphasis on religion as such because of the linea determined by the parish leaders. There is no doubt about the parish's commitment to the poor through the integration of the (parish) school, the Vespertina (evening school), the posta medica (clinic), and the other programs. I was also amazed at the openness that has taken place: the poor in the school, the rich volunteering to give service, and the good relations between the rich and the poor kids."

An excellent eight-page report on Holy Name Parish, with photos and interviews with a number of the principals in the change, is available from the Franciscan Communications Office. Send a 10-cent stamp for a copy of the "Close-Up" feature on Holy Name Parish in Lima to Father Roy Gasnick, OFM, Dir. of Communications, 135 W 31st St., New York, N.Y. 10001.

"There is no difference between a Catholic and a Protestant sium," he said. "There is no difference between a loyalist and a republican gunman. They are both an abomination in a Christian country."

"It is the duty of all men and women of good will to isolate these enemies of peace and refuse them comfort."

Warning against a resigned acceptance in Britain of violence in Ulster, Cardinal Heenan said, "To us in England the tragedy of Northern Ireland has become one of the facts of life. We accept it as I imagine the Americans accepted Vietnam."

"It means reading in the paper about a bomb that maimed half a dozen people, about sectarian assassinations, about young soldiers being shot. We do well to ask what these news items mean in terms of flesh and blood."

The cardinal said Christians must not allow themselves to regard this tragic situation as just one of the facts of life. The only way to peace in Northern Ireland is mutual love and respect between all citizens.

"They cannot undo the past or even forget it," he said, "but they can surely agree that no people alive today are responsible for the tragedy."

'Cross Walk' Planned

By PEG PEASE

Wayland — Plans for Cross Walk, an ecumenical endeavor, "are pretty well finalized and a few changes and improvements have been made," according to John Landino, coordinator of the walk.

Landino describes Cross Walk as a modern way of "retracing the steps of Jesus on that memorial first Friday."

The 2 1/2-mile walk (one way) will begin at the Wayland Town Hall on Main Street at 1 p.m. on

Good Friday, April 12. It follows Main Street to Fremont Street, turning right onto Second Avenue then onto County Line Road and up Calvary Hill (formerly Selbig Hill). The Cross Walk was innovated by the Wayland Council of Churches in 1973 as a way to express to God our faith in His Son, Jesus Christ and the common belief of all faiths that His Son died for mankind.

Landino has invited the participants to bring a cross to carry, and along the way there will be 14 stops at which the group will take time to meditate and pray.

Prayer books and hymnals will be issued for individual use. At the end of the way on top of Calvary Hill, there will be a large cross erected where all may contemplate the actual Crucifixion. A special Sermon on the Mount will highlight the ending of the Cross Walk.

Landino invites anyone "from 3 to 75 who feels he or she can walk the 2 1/2 miles to come and bring a friend." There will be an additional 250 books on hand for the anticipated larger crowd. Cross Walk will be held rain or shine.



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