

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

The Holy Spirit—Person with a Mission

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

The year 1974 stands somewhere in history between the Lord's return to His Heavenly Father and His final return in glory to judge the living and the dead. In the between, whose length of days we know not, His presence will be with us through the Holy Spirit, who will be the Consoler of the Church, her teacher and guide, a witness of the Lord's presence and a lawyer for Him and His Church in all her struggles against the powers of darkness.



Jesus is alive and abides among us because He has sent His Spirit to dwell in our midst. This day and every day until His final coming is the age of His Spirit. How sad, then, it is that in this final age of the Church the Holy Spirit is so often referred to as the forgotten Person of the Trinity!

Yet it was the Lord himself who reminded us of the blessedness of His own departure from earth as the necessary prelude to the coming of His Spirit: "Yet I tell you the sober truth: it is much better for you that I go. If I fail to go, the Paraclete will never come to you, whereas if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin, about justice, about condemnation. About sin — in that they refuse to believe in Me; about justice — from the fact that I go to the Father and you can see Me no more; about condemnation — for the prince of this world has been condemned." (John 16:7-11)

This is one of the most astounding passages of the New Testament as it assures us that the condition for the coming of the

Holy Spirit is the departure of Jesus. This statement of St. John is, then, the condition for the vitality of the Church of every age. It tells us that the Jesus who walked this earth 2,000 years ago may be touched today — and that our world is condemned only in its unbelief in Him who is the sole hope of our salvation.

Jesus influences us today uniquely through the Holy Spirit who is in reality His successor. To accept Him is to accept Christ because the work of the Spirit is to strengthen faith in Jesus. The vocation of the Holy Spirit is to remind us of Jesus' mission and to give us the strength to continue His mission — to condemn the world in light of the evidence and the proven facts of the victory of the Resurrection.

It is the Holy Spirit's mission to be our instructor in the full meaning of Jesus' teaching — to penetrate the message, not through a sterile jogging of our memory of what He once said, i.e., in a revival of what may have been forgotten about Him — but in an ability to extract the richness and the depths of His teaching. The Holy Spirit works within our spirit to tell us Jesus means this today: "Live His message in the depths of its painful implication of personal commitment. Merely to recall a Gospel passage will never do. Be alive to the contemporary demands of His Word which is a message for all ages."

The Holy Spirit is our Consoler Who gives us encouragement and a sense of direction — suggests practical conclusion to the disciple in doubt in a world which could easily discourage us. He has been given to us to remind us: "The reason the world hates you is that you do not belong to the world!" (John 15:19) In other words, He assures us that we should reassess our priorities and opt for Jesus.

He is our lawyer who provides motives to sustain the wavering Christian. We need the assurance today that the Lord has vindicated Himself. To consult the Holy Spirit is to be reminded that victory is ours. He has won His case and has assured us that justice will triumph.

Though invisible, the Holy Spirit is present in our world. Only faith assures us that He consoles, teaches, guides, witnesses and prosecutes. Yet His is helplessness except through our conspiring with Him Who renews the face of the earth. As the Scripture scholar, Father Raymond Brown, has so aptly expressed it: "The only way that the Paraclete can exercise His ministry is through Christians and their way of life and the way they bear witness." (The Paraclete in the 4th Gospel — New Testament Studies — 13)

Hopefully, may we never stifle the Presence of the Spirit and the 'Conspiring of God' — Who wills to breathe within our spirit to bring us to our full human potential. How often I ponder this possibility during the rites of Confirmation and Priestly Ordination. If we learned to live in the Spirit and to invoke His help each day, how truly great we might be!

O Holy Spirit, rest a tongue of fire upon each of us — be the power of our words, the warmth of our love, the spark of life we share. May we know ourselves in the shining of our light. And may your fire in us set our tired world aflame! you are God's gift to us — Be our heart's most welcome guest!

(First in a series of three articles)

vatican news

Vatican Justifies Discipline of Former Abbot

Vatican City [RNS] — The Vatican press office has issued a statement intended to justify a disciplinary action taken recently against a controversial Benedictine priest in Rome who has publicly defended the right of Italian Catholics to vote in favor of divorce.

Faisal 'Very Worried' Over Holy Places, Papal Legate Says

Vatican City [RNS] — A top Vatican official disclosed that he had recently discussed the "problem of the Holy Places" in Jerusalem with King Faisal of Saudi Arabia.

Cardinal Sergio Pignedoli, president of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians, in an interview on Vatican Radio, said the Arab leader "spoke openly" about the question during talks in Riyadh, the royal capital, "as he is very worried."

Cardinal Pignedoli returned here recently after two days of talks with King Faisal and other government officials.

"Obviously, we are all worried about the problem," the Vatican prelate said. "The great communities — the Muslim and Christian communities and also the Jewish community. We are concerned that all three communities of believers should have true and effective and equal access to and use of Jerusalem and its Holy Places."

The priest, 46-year-old Father Giovanni Franzoni, a former abbot of the Benedictine community of the Roman Basilica of St. Paul's Outside-the-Walls, was "suspended" from his spiritual functions by his religious superiors on April 27.

He had voluntarily resigned as

Asked if "any new elements" emerged from his meeting with King Faisal, described in the broadcast as "one of Islam's greatest leaders," Cardinal Pignedoli replied:

"No, it only emerged that we are perfectly in agreement in hoping that international organizations, the United Nations especially — and we also hope Geneva (the planned Mideast peace talks in Geneva) — will clarify the position, also in the interest of Israel itself, in such a way that the Holy Places do not constitute an element of discord, but of union."

Referring to Pope Paul's statement of April 5, the cardinal said the pontiff "justly spoke" of Jerusalem as "the capital of monotheism."

The papal message expressed esteem for King Faisal "in his capacity as the highest Islamic authority," and emphasized "the need to unify the efforts of the Islamic and Christian worlds to oppose the materialism sweeping the world today."

abbot, last year, to live and work among the poor in a workers' district near St. Paul's, and organize a neighborhood community.

In the "note" released May 2, Vatican authorities "affirmed" that the suspension of Father Franzoni was due "to an attitude which he has assumed in these latter years on the doctrinal and operative plane" and is "a total judgement on his position as an abbot and as a Benedictine monk."

The reason for the disciplinary action, the note explained, is to be found "not only in his attitude of disobedience to precise and repeated admonitions from his monastic superiors, but also, and in particular, in his notorious ways of thinking and acting, which deviated from the common doctrine of the Church and did not correspond with the good of the ecclesial community."

Father Franzoni, whose former rank as abbot was equal to that of a bishop, has been a center of controversy ever since his election to the office in 1964.

(Last June, after announcing his intention of resigning from the post, he said he wanted to step down to avoid having to share in the responsibilities of the Church's hierarchy, whose majority he charged with "connivance" with "the powerful and the rich.")

The Vatican note criticized the Benedictine's "insupportable concept of the Church."

"For years," it said, "he reproved the Church for sup-

porting the capitalistic system and modelling itself on oppressive power structures."

At the same time, it charged, Father Franzoni espoused a concept of a Church, "vaguely charismatic" and modelled after "Marxism and the class struggle."

(In the past, the Benedictine priest has participated in anti-war demonstrations, defended the rights of "conscientious objectors," and supported workers in industrial disputes and strikes.)

According to the Vatican statement, Father Franzoni has "openly rebelled" against the ordinary Magisterium (teaching authority) of the church, and "contested" various papal documents, thus creating "widespread uneasiness in the Church" and giving rise to "sorrowful lacerations in the ecclesial community."

The statement denied that the monk's actions could be justified on the basis of the "pluralism" admitted in the Church.

"No one in the post-conciliar Church intends to prevent or suffocate just pluralism," it declared, "and Father Franzoni has proof of this himself."

"But pluralism is not permissible if it does not operate within the ambit of the community in a way that enriches the community with genuine evangelical and spiritual values."

"The doctrine of salvation is one, and the community must not split apart, but must be built up in unity."

"Unfortunately," said the Vatican note, Father Franzoni "operated against unity of doctrine and against the harmony of the community by attitudes which were clearly anti-ecclesial."

It noted, in particular, the priest's "refusal" to accept traditional Catholic teaching on the "indissolubility" of marriage, and his "disavowal" of Pope Paul's encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, which condemns contraception.

Pontiff Pushes Gregorian Chant

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul has sent, as his own "personal gift," a printed booklet containing Latin (Gregorian) chants to every Roman Rite Catholic bishop and major religious superior throughout the world.

The booklet, entitled *Jubilare Deo* (Rejoice in the Lord), includes a minimal repertoire of Gregorian chants the pontiff wishes used in the Roman Rite Eucharistic liturgy.

The booklet was accompanied by a document of the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship which said that Pope Paul "desires the faithful in every country to know at least some Gregorian chant in Latin, as for example, the Gloria, the Credo, the Sanctus, the Pater Noster, and the Agnus Dei, so that they can be helped to associate themselves in spirit with all their brothers in the faith and with the living traditions of past centuries."