



Photo by Susan McKinney

On to First Grade!

Probably thinking of the many graduations ahead of them, several members of the kindergarten class at St. John's, Greece, wore a variety of expressions as they posed for this picture. It's the first such class at the school in ten years. From left in the first row are: Robert Seibold, Stephanie Steivas, Lori Gonyo, David Hermans, Colleen O'Dowd, Wendy Stephany, Sharon Knope and David Laurer. From left in second row, Mary Beth Garvia, Peter Storath, Susan Thornberg, Brenda Connelly.

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Father Paul J. Cuddy

What do you think of these new cities without churches?

Perhaps satisfactory cities for those who reject God and religion. I think of them as modern abominations.

Pius XI wrote in 1937: "Where Communism has been able to assert its power, it has striven by every possible means, as its champions openly boast, to destroy Christian civilization and the Christian religion, by banishing every remembrance of them from the hearts of men, especially the young (Atheistic Communism). That encyclical had a great impact on much of the world, because the world in 1937 believed that religion and worship are part of normal human living. Churchless cities can also be the fruit of capitalistic atheism. The question is: will Christians and Jews accept the concept of a churchless city as a kind of progress?"

But religious services are to be available when desired.

What does that mean? Where? In a multi-purpose building to be made available at certain times, for those who care to get together for worship? The rest of the time the building can be used for recreation, tap dancing, light manufacturing shops, etc? Bishop Lawrence B. Casey recently wrote an editorial called The Vital Plus. It reads:

"A community without churches is no place to build a home and bring up children. There is infinitely more to the health and well-being of a community than its industry and commerce, its homes and recreational facilities. The vital plus is the basic faith and religious spirit of its residents.

Not that church buildings are holy in themselves nor by themselves make people holier. First of all, homes and the neighborhood must be places of faith and charity. The churches, however, are places where the total community worships the Lord and celebrates His gifts of life. There the Church, those who comprise the family of God, renew and revitalize their faith (Beacon 5/23/74).

ROSARY OFFICERS

Van Etten — Janet Sullivan is president of the newly organized Altar-Rosary Society of St. Pius X parish. Other officers are: Hazel Givens, vice president; Melba Lakin, treasurer; Frances Jenki, corresponding secretary; and Florence Cotton, recording secretary.

But Churches are so costly, and useless excepting for occasional services.

Judas Iscariot asked "Why this waste?" The Vandals sacked Rome. They destroyed glorious works of art and buildings and books because they did not appreciate beauty. Beauty, as well as truth and the sacraments, elevates the human spirit.

For example, in 1954 I spent a whole day at the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico City. The basilica is handsome, and cost a lot of money to build.

What impressed me more than the building were the Mexican Indians who came all day long in throngs to celebrate in their Mother's house. I recall vividly a young mother sitting in a pew in the middle of the church, nursing her fat little baby from her ample milk-filled breast, gazing tranquilly at the miraculous picture of our Lady. The mother was perfectly at home and shared the artistic beauty and piety of the building. I'm afraid that critics of the Church's love for beauty think of the poor more as animals who munch on cabbages and potatoes, than as human beings who can appreciate transcendence and loveliness.

But must our churches be so costly?

That depends. Sacred Heart in Auburn recently built a modern church which is devotional and in good taste, and not very costly. After years of celebrating Mass in a multi-functional hall, used for basketball, bingo and dances, it is a joy to the parishioners to have a fitting House of God.

Our Mother of Sorrows, Rochester, is a magnificent reminder to all that God is honored by a loving, devout people. Even those not of the Faith have a constant reminder of the presence of God and His Church. Those who go inside will find two sets of unique Stations of the Cross made by Sister Frances Cabrini, SSJ, of St. Joseph's Villa. The Stations are beautiful art. They inspire devotion. The concept of "Cheap is good enough for God" is foreign to the teaching of the Bible and to the hearts of believers.

Then you oppose churchless cities?

I do, with vigor. And I am in favor of churches in cities which tower up, if possible, as reminders of the love of men for God and his saints. Have you ever pondered over the positive implications in the first part of the Ten Commandments: "I am the Lord, thy God?"

Fr. Schmemmann On Channel 21

"Life and Liberty" a half-hour interview with Father Alexander Schmemmann is scheduled at 8 p.m. Tuesday, June 25 over Channel 21.

Father Schmemmann will, be interviewed by Ray Laws of Channel 21, Dr. Gary Kerns and Courier-Journal columnist Mrs. Nancy Murphy. Mrs. Murphy writes "Life, Liberty and Law," a

column designed to keep readers posted on developments in the pro-life movement.

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