

THE OPEN WINDOW

Father Louis Hohman

Dear Father Hohman,

The bush-beaters for a married ministry have a potent cause and I sincerely do fear for their effectiveness. Not fear for — just fear. We are not talking doctrine, I know, but we are dealing with "approach." I know the Apostles were married men; I know Christ never demanded celibacy for his workers. But a married ministry becomes 1] very expensive, and 2] subject to lapses in efficacy. I would not call my doctor during the dinner hour, nor on weekends, except in cases of extreme emergency, because I believe he owes his family some of his time. I would call my priest any time; he exists for a single purpose — to serve his parishioners. So you have a priest who becomes an employe of the Church, with hours, with outside demands, with a sick wife or child who is using up his "caring." It's not that it is wrong or against doctrine; it is un-sensible! I know the Protestant ministers do it all the time, but there is not a Protestant minister around, if he is married, who can give to the extent that a priest can give. So, we must make a choice. Do we want more priests or fewer but more dedicated priests?

Dear Katherine,

You have stated very well the attitude of many, many Catholics who feel the same way about their priest belonging to them in a way no one else does or can. You like to think of the priest as the spouse of "his people." And that is very beautiful. It is the only way a celibate priesthood can be maintained — the priest must live such a relationship or be an "island," which no man is.

But I would like to call to mind some tempering points: a whole section of the Roman Catholic Church (the Eastern Church) has a married clergy and I am not at all certain that they are inferior in effectiveness of their mission. The same goes for many Protestant ministers. I know they have to have very patient and understanding wives, special kind of women who fit that kind of picture, but I sure wouldn't want to write them all off as less effective. The second point I want to make is, that while celibacy does in theory free us to be at the beck and call of our parishioners 168 hours a week, we are human and it ultimately depends on the individual priest how totally he lives that out. In any case, I did enjoy your letter very much.

Katherine

AS I SEE IT

Pat Costa

A letter to the Sunday New York Times from the executive vice president of a large advertising firm caught my eye the other day.

In answer to an article written by Caryl Rivers which charged that advertisers are conjuring up impossible dreams for otherwise contented consumers, the ad executive replied that the marketers of products simply "try to respond to what ladies tell them they want, hope for, aspire to; wish for."

All I can say to that ad executive is this: Somewhere, someplace, somehow there may be women dumb enough to aspire to a kitchen floor so shiny it looks like glass, women whose values are so loused up that nothing is more important than getting clothes cleaner than the neighbor next door can, women whose lives are so barren that discovering a new room deodorizer gives them a thrill.

But if there are, thanks be to God, none of these deprived souls live around me.

Devotees of the CBS soaper "Edge of Night" are being educated these days whether they are aware of it or not: One of the leading sets of characters Police Chief William Marceau and his wife are in the middle of a tragedy brought about by the private adoption of a gray market baby. An unscrupulous lawyer and the greedy young mother of the child are extorting funds from the couple threatening to take away the youngster if the helpless

ROOM DEDICATED

Bath — A new meeting room has been made in St. Mary's School and has been dedicated to St. Joseph in memory of Mr. Vincent Keefe. It has been given in his memory by his wife, Olga.

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couple do not comply with their demands.

In an unprecedented lesson, millions of viewers are learning in slow, tortured vignettes just what can happen to people who attempt to adopt without the help of an agency. The pitfalls are legion and if this soap opera drama is overdone to the extreme it does point up the precarious and often tragic situation that can ensue from private adoptions.


Obviously a TV documentary, a good magazine article, a newspaper expose might do a better job of informing people. But we can rest assured of one thing. No medium reaches more people than the soap opera.

This is not the first time the day-time dramas have worked social education into their story lines. I think they have already covered such topics as cancer of the cervix and breast urging woman to have pap smears and complete checkups regularly.

"All My Children," ABC's popular show at 1 p.m., is currently exposing the problem of child abuse through its script. Alcoholism, venereal disease, abortion, mental retardation have all been subjects for the various creators and writers of the soaps.

The value of such forums is instantly apparent. Not only does the material reach people who might not otherwise pay attention to a presentation of the subject but it does so in dramatic form, a most effective method to make a point.

The soap writers and their talented casts are to be commended for what they do in this area.


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CLSA Head Lauds Action On U.S. Marriage Norms

Hartford [RNS] — Pope Paul's extension of the "American norms" for handling marriage annulment cases is the answer to a "dire pastoral need" and shows the Church is truly concerned with the basic needs of people, a top aide of the Canon Law Society of America (CLSA) said here.

He also said the extension set precedents for national hierarchies "bargaining" with the Vatican for the rights of the local Church, and implementing the Vatican II concepts of "subsidiarity and collegiality."

Father Thomas J. Lynch, executive coordinator of the CLSA and chancellor of the Hartford archdiocese, pointed out that the granting of the extension of the norms was "a pastoral necessity" and "not a special gift out of the largesse of the universal Church."

While he expressed confidence that the personnel of U.S. diocesan marriage courts will be "happy" about the Pope's action, he told Religious News Service that "had the norms not been granted it could have meant the death of the tribunal system as we know it."

Father Lynch said it was a case of either granting the norms or "courting a situation of underground tribunals."

Although he said the importance of the extension cannot be overemphasized Father Lynch noted that the situation has "much wider ramifications."

"It shows that the American Catholic hierarchy has come of age," he stated. He asserted that the bishops remained committed to the principle that they "had important pastoral obligations" and were able to gain the procedures they were convinced

Fete to Reflect Parish History

Results of an election held at Saint Stanislaus Church on Sunday, June 2, have been reported by the parish council. Elected to the council are Mrs. Eugene de Manincor, David Rodgers, Larry Jermyn, Mrs. Daniel Gudell, and Bill Lipinski. They will serve two-year terms.

Also announced at the June 12 council meeting was the summer festival to be held on parish grounds Aug. 9, 10, 11, under the chairmanship of David Rodgers. This will be the first festival in more than twenty years. Several booths are planned to reflect the Polish history of the parish.

Business In The Diocese

James S. Capellupo, branch manager of the new downtown Rochester office of Home Federal Savings and Loan Association at the four corners, won the statewide speaking contest, sponsored by the American Savings and Loan Association.

He and his wife are members of St. John of Rochester Church, Fairport.

were needed for the good of the people they serve.

"It shows that the bishops are not the 'lackeys' of Rome many people make them out to be," said the priest. "It shows that they are men of intelligence and discretion . . ."

Father Lynch pointed to another "important factor" inherent in the extension of the American norms — that the "central issue is the pastoral needs of the people and the pastoral obligations of the bishops."

In addition, he said, it shows that the Pope is "not in-

transigent" to all petitions. In fact, the priest noted, the discussion of extension of the norms last February (in which he participated) "was an exceptionally fine and open exchange in which new data was well-received and situations were seen in different lights."

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